United Nations A/62/128

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Item 41 of the preliminary list*
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Question of Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/125 of 14 December 2006, summarizes the reports that have been submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.

1. On 14 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/125 on the question of Western Sahara by a recorded vote of 70 to none with 91 abstentions. The Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, has continued to exercise his good offices with the parties concerned. The present report, which covers the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007, is submitted in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 61/125.

2. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1675 (2006), the Secretary-General submitted on 16 October 2006 a report to the Security Council (S/2006/817) in which he stated that, during his various meetings in the region, from 4 to 11 September, and in New York, his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Mr. Peter van Walsum, had listened to the parties' concerns and positions on the way out of the current impasse, and reiterated his recommendation for negotiations without preconditions between Morocco and the Frente Polisario.

3. With regard to military activities, the Secretary-General informed the Security Council that the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) continued to enjoy good relations with both the Royal Moroccan Army

* A/62/50.

07-42832 (E) 130807

and the Frente Polisario armed forces, although the parties continued to abstain from dealing directly with each other. On 1 June 2006, MINURSO had started to record restrictions on freedom of movement for military observers as violations of military agreement No. 1, and from 1 June to 5 October 2006, 539 such violations had been recorded on the side of the Royal Moroccan Army and 86 on the Frente Polisario side. The Mission had organized mine-awareness activities in the form of mine-risk education in the refugee camps of Tindouf.

4. With regard to confidence-building measures, the Secretary-General stated that the programme of exchange of family visits between the Territory and the refugee camps in the Tindouf area in Algeria, which is led by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), had been resumed on 25 November 2005 after an 11-month hiatus. However, it had been suspended again late in May 2006 owing to difficulties related to flight schedules. The telephone service between the Tindouf camps and the Territory continued to operate successfully, and UNHCR remained ready to implement the postal service in accordance with the modalities initially proposed or under any terms that would meet the approval of all concerned.

5. In his recommendations and conclusions, the Secretary-General stated that, based on the assessment of his Personal Envoy's activities, he would like to recommend that the Security Council call on the two parties, Morocco and the Frente Polisario, to enter into negotiations without preconditions, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. The neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, would also be invited to those negotiations and consulted separately on issues directly affecting them, in accordance with the format that was observed during the tenure of the previous Personal Envoy, James A. Baker III.

6. Concluding the report, the Secretary-General expressed his appreciation to his Special Representative, Francesco Bastagli, for serving with great dedication until the end of September 2006.

7. On 31 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 1720 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of MINURSO until 30 April 2007. The Council also reaffirmed its strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy; reiterated its call upon the parties and States of the region to continue to cooperate fully with the United Nations to end the current impasse and to achieve progress towards a political solution; and reaffirmed the need for full respect of the military agreements reached with MINURSO with regard to the ceasefire.

8. In a letter dated 31 January 2007 (S/2007/55), the Secretary-General informed the President of the Security Council of his intention to appoint Julian Harston of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as his Special Representative for Western Sahara.

9. On 13 April 2007, the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council the report (S/2007/202) the Council had requested in its resolution 1720 (2006), in which he informed the Council that on 10 April he had received a letter from the Representative of the Frente Polisario in New York transmitting a "Proposal of the Frente Polisario for a mutually acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara"; and that on 11 April, he had

met with the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations who had given him a letter, dated 10 April 2007, transmitting a document entitled "Moroccan initiative for negotiating an autonomy statute for the Sahara region", containing the initiative by King Mohamed VI of Morocco regarding the autonomy proposal.

10. Regarding consultations held by his Personal Envoy, the Secretary-General noted that he had underlined, once again, that the negotiations between Morocco and the Frente Polisario, recommended in the report of the Secretary-General of 16 October 2006 (S/2006/817), would have the objective of achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

11. As for military matters, the Secretary-General informed the Council that the overall situation in the area of responsibility had remained generally calm. Violations of military agreement No. 1 by both parties had remained at the same level as in the previous reporting period. From 6 October 2006 to 31 March 2007, MINURSO had observed and recorded eight new violations by the Royal Moroccan Army and seven new violations by the military forces of the Frente Polisario. In addition, MINURSO had continued to observe long-standing violations by both parties; as explained in his previous report to the Council (S/2006/817), since the start of the Mission's mandate, both parties had imposed restrictions on the freedom of movement of MINURSO military observers.

12. With regard to military agreements Nos. 2 and 3, both parties had continued to extend cooperation to MINURSO in the marking and disposal of mines and unexploded ordnance and expired ammunition. In an effort to respond to that threat, on 15 January 2007, the Royal Moroccan Army, deploying considerable resources, had begun a comprehensive mine-clearing operation in Western Sahara from the Atlantic coast to the berm.

13. With regard to refugees, in January 2007, UNHCR and the World Food Programme had sent a joint assessment mission to Tindouf to verify the food requirements of the Saharan refugees for the following two years. The Mission recommended that the refugees should continue to receive emergency food assistance. Pending a registration of refugees, the caseload would be established at 90,000 beneficiaries. In line with the recommendation of the Mission, 35,000 supplementary rations would also be distributed to women of childbearing age, malnourished children under 5 years of age and schoolchildren, in order to address serious problems of chronic malnutrition and anaemia among those particularly vulnerable sectors of the camps' populations.

14. Turning to the issue of confidence-building measures, the Secretary-General reported that on 3 November 2006, after a six-month hiatus, UNHCR and MINURSO had been able to resume the programme of exchange of family visits between the Territory and the refugee camps in the Tindouf area. In addition, the four free telephone centres connecting the Tindouf refugee camps and the Territory had continued to operate successfully.

15. With regard to human rights, the Secretary-General informed the Security Council that during the period under review, demonstrations by Saharans calling for respect for human rights and the right to self-determination had been reported to have continued in the Territory. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had continued to follow the human

rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps and remained committed to ensuring that the rights of the people of Western Sahara were fully protected.

16. Concluding the report, the Secretary-General reiterated his recommendation that the Security Council call upon the parties, Morocco and the Frente Polisario, to enter into negotiations without preconditions, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. The neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, should also be invited to the negotiations and be consulted separately on issues directly affecting them, in accordance with the format that was observed during the tenure of his previous Personal Envoy, James A. Baker, III.

17. Related to the human dimension of the conflict, the Secretary-General stated that he was pleased that the exchange of family visits between the Territory and the refugee camps in the Tindouf area had resumed. Building on the success of those visits, he was encouraged by recent indications that the parties concerned had been exploring the possibility of increasing the number of beneficiaries of the programme.

18. The Secretary-General further repeated the call made by his predecessor (see S/2006/817) for the parties to remain engaged in continuous and constructive dialogue with OHCHR with a view to ensuring respect for the human rights of the people of Western Sahara. He also reiterated that, although MINURSO did not have the mandate or resources to address the issue, the United Nations remained committed to upholding international human rights standards.

19. On 30 April 2007, the Security Council adopted resolution 1754 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of MINURSO until 31 October 2007. The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to assist the parties to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations; and, noting the role and responsibilities of the parties in that respect, reiterated its call upon the parties and States of the region to continue to cooperate fully with the United Nations and with each other to end the current impasse and to achieve progress towards a political solution; took note of the Moroccan proposal presented on 11 April 2007 to the Secretary-General and welcomed serious and credible Moroccan efforts to move the process forward towards resolution; and also took note of the Polisario Front proposal presented on 10 April 2007 to the Secretary-General. The Council also called upon the parties to enter into negotiations without preconditions in good faith, taking into account the developments of the last months, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara; requested the Secretary-General to set up those negotiations under his auspices and invited Member States to lend appropriate assistance to such talks; and requested the Secretary-General to provide a report by 30 June 2007 on the status and progress of those negotiations under his auspices.

20. On 29 June 2007, the Secretary-General submitted his report (S/2007/385), which the Security Council had requested in its resolution 1754 (2007), and informed the Council that in a letter, dated 25 May 2007, he had invited the parties to send delegations to meet with his Personal Envoy at the Greentree Estate in Manhasset, New York, on 18 and 19 June 2007. In his letter, it had been specified

that the discussions would be private. In similar letters, he had invited Algeria and Mauritania to attend the Manhasset meeting as neighbouring countries. The Secretary-General further informed the Council that the meeting had taken place as planned. The parties had held separate meetings with his Personal Envoy, as well as two sessions of face-to-face discussions, for the first time since direct talks had been held in London and Berlin, in 2000. Representatives of the neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, were present at the opening and closing sessions and were consulted separately during the two-day meeting. During the discussions, the parties had reiterated their commitment to the process and had appeared determined not to be the cause of a breakdown of the negotiations. Although they had both confirmed their respect for the principle of self-determination and accepted Security Council resolution 1754 (2007) as the mandate for the negotiations, their positions had remained far apart on the definition of self-determination.

21. During the meeting, the parties had agreed to the communiqué of his Personal Envoy, stating that:

> In accordance with Security Council resolution 1754 (2007) of 30 April 2007 on Western Sahara, the Secretary-General arranged for Morocco and the Frente Polisario to enter into negotiations, without preconditions, in good faith, taking into account the developments of the last months, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. Under the Secretary-General's auspices, the meeting was held at the Greentree Estate in Manhasset, New York, on 18 and 19 June 2007, with the participation of the parties, Morocco and the Frente Polisario. Representatives of the neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, were also present at the opening and closing sessions and were consulted separately. During the meeting, negotiations started as requested by Security Council resolution 1754 (2007). The parties have agreed that the process of negotiations will continue in Manhasset in the second week of August 2007.

United Nations A/62/129

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 July 2007
English
Original: French

Sixty-second session
Item 101 (e) of the preliminary list
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

During the period under review, the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa held two ministerial meetings.

At the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth ministerial meetings held in Kigali from 25 to 29 September 2006, and São Tomé from 14 to 18 May 2007, respectively, the Committee continued its tradition of reviewing, inter alia, the geopolitical and security situation in some States members. Despite some progress and what it hoped was the beginning of a positive trend in the subregion, the Committee nevertheless noted that armed clashes were still continuing in some areas and that the humanitarian and human rights situation unfortunately still gave cause for concern.

The Committee also expressed its deep concern at the impact of the Darfur crisis on regional security. It took note of the influx of refugees and threats to the stability, security and territorial integrity of the Sudan's neighbours, especially Chad and the Central African Republic.

At the São Tomé meeting, States members of the Committee demonstrated their support for the efforts by the Office for Disarmament Affairs to revitalize the Committee's work by adopting concrete measures.

The Committee concluded its consideration of the agenda item on cross-border security problems in Central Africa by deciding to hold a subregional conference on the matter during its twenty-sixth ministerial meeting to be held in Yaoundé from 3 to 7 September 2007.

07-42752 (E) 090807 100807

At the end of the twenty-fifth meeting, the Committee also adopted the São Tomé initiative, which provides for the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa and of code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa.

In conclusion, the 11 States members of the Committee reaffirmed their commitment to taking action to strengthen peace and security in the subregion. Aware of the importance of the Committee, States members agreed to work together, with the support of the United Nations and its partners, to implement the decisions taken at meetings. In that regard, the Committee requested interested States, especially those in a position to do so, to assist it in financing its projects, through the United Nations trust fund.

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–3	3
II.	Meetings of the Standing Advisory Committee	4–30	3
	A. The twenty-fourth ministerial meeting of the Committee	4–11	3
	B. The twenty-fifth ministerial meeting of the Committee	12–26	4
	C. Revitalization of the Committee's methods of work and inputs from the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs	27–30	7
III.	Administrative and financial matters	31–32	8
IV.	Conclusions and observations	33–36	8

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/96, the General Assembly, inter alia, reaffirmed its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to further sustainable peace, stability and development in the subregion. It also reaffirmed its support for the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee adopted at the organizational meeting of the Committee, held at Yaoundé in July 1992 (see A/47/511).

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the States members of the Committee with assistance to ensure that they are able to carry out their efforts and further requested him to submit to it at its sixty-second session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The present report is submitted in response to that request. It covers the activities undertaken by the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa from July 2006 to June 2007.

II. Meetings of the Standing Advisory Committee

A. The twenty-fourth ministerial meeting of the Committee

4. The Twenty-fourth meeting of the Committee was held from 25 to 29 September 2006 in Kigali. The agenda considered by the 11 States members[1] included:

(a) Recent developments in the geopolitical and security situation in some member States of the Committee, including Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(b) The impact of the Darfur crisis on the security of some States members of the Committee;

(c) An exchange of national experiences in the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and in the implementation in Central Africa of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;

(d) The establishment by Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda and São Tomé and Principe of the Central African Early Warning System.

5. The Committee welcomed the progress achieved in the situation in Burundi, in particular the signing in Dar es Salaam on 7 September 2006 of a Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Burundi and Agathon Rwasa's Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu — Forces nationales de libération (PALIPEHUTU-FNL),

[1] Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and São Tomé and Principe.

the pursuit of the disarmament and demobilization process and the progress achieved in disbanding militias.

6. The Committee encouraged the Government of Burundi to continue its efforts to restore lasting peace in the country and to fully implement the political and economic reforms already under way. There was an urgent need to resolve conflicts over land ownership and use and to protect human rights.

7. The Committee expressed concern about insecurity in the Central African Republic as a result of fighting between rebel movements and Government forces. Such clashes had led to the steady deterioration of the humanitarian and human rights situation. In the socio-economic sphere, the Committee appealed to bilateral and multilateral donors and international financial institutions to pay special attention to the economic and financial situation of the Central African Republic and to provide it with special assistance.

8. The Committee welcomed the significant progress made in the implementation of the transition process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the holding of legislative elections and the presidential election of 30 July 2006. However, it deplored the deadly clashes that had taken place from 20 to 22 August 2006 between the Republican Guard and former Vice-President Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo's protection unit, which had resulted in civilian victims. It urged the country's political leaders to conduct the elections in a peaceful and responsible manner, and encouraged them to give priority to conciliation and harmony in the best interests of the Congolese people.

9. The Committee expressed concern at the persistence of allegations of serious violations of human rights in the context of military operations in Ituri and northern Katanga. It welcomed the measures taken by the authorities to combat impunity and strongly urged them to prosecute and punish everyone found guilty of human rights violations. It urged the Democratic Republic of the Congo authorities to join with the United Nations and its partners to implement a comprehensive policy for the settlement of the current humanitarian crisis.

10. The Committee expressed concern at the activities of Chadian rebel groups based in Darfur that not only posed a serious threat to Chad's security and stability but also created serious tension between Chad and the Sudan. The Committee expressed deep concern about the deterioration of the situation in Darfur and the possible spread of the crisis to countries of the subregion. It roundly condemned the acts of violence perpetrated against refugees, displaced persons, the civilian population and humanitarian workers in eastern Chad.

11. It appealed to the international community and the United Nations to help the Government of Chad ensure the security of refugees from Darfur living in camps in Chad, provide greater assistance to them and guarantee the camps' neutrality. The Committee noted with deep concern information about the development of cross-border trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

B. The twenty-fifth ministerial meeting of the Committee

12. The twenty-fifth ministerial meeting of the Committee was held in São Tomé from 14 to 18 May 2007. The following member States took part in the meeting: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and São Tomé and Principe. The Central African Republic was absent. Chad, although unable to be present, nevertheless transmitted its contribution to the proceedings.

13. The Committee invited the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to attend the meeting as observers.

14. The issues considered by the States included:

(a) Recent developments in the geopolitical and security situation in some States members of the Committee, namely Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(b) The project for a subregional conference on cross-border security problems in Central Africa; the impact of the Darfur crisis and developments relating to security in the Great Lakes region;

(c) The project for the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa;

(d) The project for the drafting of a code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa;

(e) Institutional evolution of peace and security structures and mechanisms in Central Africa;

(f) Revitalization of the work of the Committee.

15. Developments in the geopolitical and security situation in the countries concerned have shown sharp contrasts since the twenty-fourth meeting of the Committee. Despite some genuine advances in the peace processes under way, the persistence of tension, the deterioration of the security situation, and the resurgence of frequent armed confrontations highlight the fragility of peace in the countries covered.

16. The Committee welcomed the progress achieved in the political and security situation in Burundi, but deplored the delays in implementing the Ceasefire Agreement and the continued proliferation of firearms among the population. It urged the Government and PALIPEHUTU-FNL to ensure that the Agreement was fully implemented and to continue to cooperate closely and in good faith in order to reach a solution to all outstanding problems. It also invited the South African mediator, the members of the regional peace initiative and the other partners to lend support to the implementation of the Agreement.

17. The Committee expressed its deep concern about the instability of the situation in the Central African Republic. It encouraged the authorities and all the political actors to give priority to dialogue and work towards the strengthening of democracy in the Central African Republic. The Committee welcomed the decision of President Bozize to initiate an inclusive dialogue with the opposition parties and the representatives of armed rebel groups. It encouraged the Panel of the Wise to pursue, with the help of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), the efforts to organize that dialogue. The Committee welcomed the decision of the United Nations to deploy an operation to

secure the borders of the Central African Republic, Chad and the Sudan and the dispatch of a multidisciplinary technical assessment mission to the region.

18. As it had done at the twenty-fourth ministerial meeting, the Committee welcomed the relatively peaceful holding of the presidential election and the legislative, provincial and senatorial elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It applauded the political, financial, technical and logistical efforts made by the international community and congratulated the Congolese people on their sense of civic responsibility.

19. The Committee deplored the deadly clashes that had taken place from 22 to 24 March 2007 in Kinshasa between guards assigned to protect former Vice-President Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo and other soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). It once again urged the country's political leaders to give priority to the interests of the country and the security of the Congolese people. The Committee also expressed concern at the precarious security situation in Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and northern Katanga.

20. The Committee expressed deep concern at the multiple destabilization attempts against Chad owing to repeated attacks by rebel groups based in Darfur. The Committee objected to the abuse perpetrated by militias against the civilian population and considered that the violence was affecting the progress achieved with the conclusion of peace agreements between the Government of Chad and some factions of the political-military opposition and the consequent integration into the February 2007 Government of senior officials of that opposition and with the signature on 2 May 2007 in Riyadh of a peace agreement between Chad and the Sudan.

21. The Committee also expressed deep concern at the humanitarian crisis in eastern and southern Chad. It strongly condemned the grave human rights violations, especially those perpetrated by the Janjaweed militias against refugees, displaced persons, the civilian populations and humanitarian workers. It appealed to the international community and the United Nations to help the Government of Chad ensure the safety of refugees from Darfur, provide the necessary assistance to them and guarantee the camps' neutrality.

22. It welcomed in this regard the dispatch to the region by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of two assessment missions to prepare the deployment of a multidisciplinary United Nations presence in the areas pursuant to Security Council resolution 1706 (2006).

23. In that context, the Committee considered that it was time for a collective review of cross-border security problems in Central Africa. It therefore decided to convene a three-day subregional conference specifically on these issues during the twenty-sixth ministerial meeting, to be held in Yaoundé from 3 to 7 September 2007. It mandated ECCAS to cooperate with the Cameroonian authorities and the United Nations for the organization of this special conference.

24. The Committee welcomed the news that the ECCAS secretariat had put the Central African Early Warning System into operation. It expressed satisfaction with the efforts of the secretariat and shared its deep appreciation for ECCAS partners and donors, and especially the European Union, for its financial and technical assistance.

25. At the end of the twenty-fifth meeting, the Committee also adopted the São Tomé Initiative regarding the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa and the drafting of a code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa.

26. In that regard, the Committee welcomed the support that the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs had agreed to provide to the ECCAS secretariat through the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and encouraged the two organizations to conclude at an early date a partnership agreement.

C. Revitalization of the Committee's methods of work and inputs from the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

27. In the course of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth ministerial meetings, representatives of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs contributed to the work of the Committee by delivering briefings on various disarmament issues. The issues covered included measures to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the complementarity of subregional instruments on small arms and light weapons and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Africa. Participants were also briefed on the participation of Central African States in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and in the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures.

28. The Committee commended the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for its efforts to revitalize the work of the Committee. In particular, it had encouraged the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to organize regular consultations in New York with the Permanent Representatives of States members of the Committee. Such informal consultations offered States members the opportunity to become more involved in the work of the Committee, to define more effective guidelines for its work and to discuss meeting preparations, thereby encouraging more active participation by their national authorities.

29. Moreover, at the invitation of the Security Council, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs briefed the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa on the Committee's activities. Regular briefings of the Security Council have been encouraged by States in order to keep members of the Security Council up to date with the Committee's activities in the subregion and to enable them to benefit from the Committee's experience in dealing with certain issues.

30. The Committee welcomed the appointment of the Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa as Secretary of the Committee for its twenty-fifth ministerial meeting. Accordingly, in the future, the Centre would be more capable of providing technical and operational follow-up to decisions taken by the Committee, including for subregional and regional capacity-building activities.

III. Administrative and financial matters

31. During the period under review, the General Assembly continued to provide funding from the regular budget for the two ministerial meetings, while the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continued to finance the activities of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

32. At the end of the 2006-2007 period, approximately US$ 13,800 will remain in the Trust Fund. The Secretary-General therefore reiterates his appeal to Member States and to intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the Trust Fund of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa in order to enable the Advisory Committee to fully implement its programme of work.

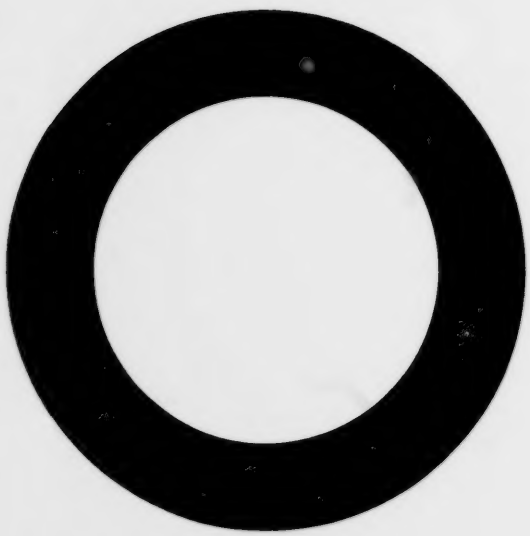
IV. Conclusions and observations

33. During the period under review, the two meetings organized by the Committee have enabled member States to share information on and experience in crisis management, armed conflict resolution and the consolidation of peace and security in countries emerging from conflict in Central Africa. The decision to hold a subregional conference on cross-border security problems reflects the determination of member States to establish lasting peace in the subregion.

34. The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth ministerial meetings also provided the opportunity for States members of the Committee to discuss how to enhance the impact of their activities. In the context of the efforts to streamline the methods of work, the closer and more regular cooperation between the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Permanent Representatives of States members of the Committee has enabled States to provide the Committee with clearer policy guidelines, and to become more involved in its programme of work as well as in the preparation of ministerial meetings. Similarly, the forming of a partnership between the ECCAS secretariat and the Office for Disarmament Affairs will facilitate cooperation between the two organizations in the area of peace and security, as well as the joint implementation of certain projects such as the São Tomé Initiative.

35. In conclusion, the 11 States members of the Committee reaffirmed their determination to use the diplomatic and political forum provided by the Committee to discuss their concerns in relation to the subregion and to adopt specific measures with respect to conflict prevention and the consolidation of peace and security. They reaffirmed their willingness to meet twice a year, in accordance with the principle of rotation that has always guided the functioning of the Committee and also to meet to deal with urgent issues should the need arise.

36. The revitalization of the work of the Committee in the current year shows that its work is not restricted to the two annual meetings financed by the United Nations regular budget. Member States are aware of the importance of the Committee and are committed to acting together, with the support of the United Nations and its partners, to implement the decisions that they make. In that connection, the Committee calls upon interested States, especially those who have the necessary means, to help with funding for implementation of specific projects through the United Nations Trust Fund.



United Nations A/62/130

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Item 101 (b) of the preliminary list*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report describes the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean during the period from July 2006 to June 2007.

During the reporting period, specific assistance was provided by the Centre and its partners to States in the region in the areas of practical disarmament measures, capacity-building and awareness-raising as well as in the preparation of national reports on weapons-related instruments and the creation of mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of disarmament treaties. Opportunities for discussion among States of the region were also provided by the Centre to facilitate their reaching of common positions on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

In support of the "one United Nations system" policy, the Centre continued to identify ways and means to create synergies and increase joint efforts with United Nations entities and/or international and non-governmental organizations to enhance the capability and capacity of States in addressing their respective disarmament and development needs.

In order for the Centre to continue to respond effectively to the number of requests for assistance from States in the region, which has increased considerably during the past few years, provision of core funding for the operations of the Centre remains of vital importance.

* A/62/50.

07-43098 (E) 070807

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	Functioning and mandate	3	3
III.	Activities	4–46	3
	A. Assisting in the implementation of disarmament measures	13–22	5
	B. Working towards mutual confidence	23–25	6
	C. Placing a human perspective on disarmament	26–27	7
	D. Maximizing public security	28–42	7
	E. Promoting a culture of peace	43–46	10
IV.	Staffing, financing and administration	47–52	10
V.	Observations and conclusions	53–60	12

Annexes

I.	Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2006	13
II.	Planned activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for which funding is sought	14

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/92 of 6 December 2006, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean with all necessary support, within existing resources, so that it may carry out its programme of activities in accordance with its mandate and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and covers the Centre's activities from July 2006 to June 2007. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre for the year 2006 is contained in annex I. An outline of some planned activities of the Centre for which funding is being sought is provided in annex II.

II. Functioning and mandate

3. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, located in Lima, was established in 1987, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/60 J of 3 December 1986. The Centre is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for the initiatives and other activities of the Member States in the region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament and for the promotion of economic and social development.

III. Activities

4. During the period under review, the Centre observed a shift in the trends and types of request for assistance from Member States. Requests evolved away from need for assistance in implementing primarily "traditional disarmament measures", such as support in the drafting of national reports, destruction of weapons and the organization of preparatory regional meetings for the implementation of treaties and other legal instruments, to requests emphasizing the need for public and human security. These new requests focus more on the need for capacity-building, sustainable national multisectoral commissions, good governance, peace education and the integration of disarmament themes into development issues.

5. In keeping with this new orientation, the profile of the Centre's partners in the field has also evolved. For instance, while the Centre continues to work closely with ministries of foreign affairs and of defence in the region, it is now also working with ministries of the interior, public safety, health, education and international development and with aid agencies.

6. In an effort to address these new requests effectively, avoid duplication and optimize the use of funds, the Centre developed an assistance policy based on the principle of partnerships and strategic alliances to create the foundations for long-term support to States.

7. At the core of this policy lies the essential coordination and cooperation with other agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. In 2006/2007, the Centre carried out a number of activities within the Coordinating Action on Small

Arms (CASA) Mechanism, thus facilitating inter-agency planning and strengthening the ability to act as "One UN System". In this connection, strategic partnerships were developed with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

8. In 2006-2007, the Centre's assistance programmes were integrated into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in two additional States of the region, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Collaboration with the UNDP country offices grew, extending to more than 11 throughout the region (in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Guatemala, Peru, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela). The majority of activities comprising this new cooperation is directed at the integration of disarmament and development issues into public security assistance measures in the field. In some cases, as in Colombia and Jamaica, new staff members were recruited to work in the respective United Nations country offices. The Centre also participated in inter-agency coordination aimed at formulating joint responses to violence and crime in northern Central America.

9. The Centre enhanced coordination with and among regional organizations with a view to strengthening synergies and avoiding duplication of efforts. Strategic alliances with regional partners, such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Common Market of the South (Mercosur), the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Andean Community were reinvigorated through joint activities in the field. Many consultative meetings were conducted throughout the reporting period with OAS, as called for in the 2001 memorandum of understanding between the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations and OAS, with a view to building a strong working relationship both at the policy and operational levels.

10. The year 2007 marks the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials. The Centre and OAS have agreed to conduct a joint study and analysis of the impact this Convention has had since its entry into force.

11. The Centre shared its experience, expertise and best practices in the area of capacity-building training on the prevention of illicit firearms trafficking for the law enforcement community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and parliamentarians. Consultations for the purpose were organized on the margins of the First Committee during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. Also, in an effort to strengthen South-South cooperation, the Centre hosted consultations between the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the African and Latin American divisions of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) from 24 to 26 October 2006 in Lima, for the purpose of transferring to them its acquired experience, knowledge and lessons learned in this area.

12. During the reporting period, the activities of the Centre focused on five main objectives, those of assisting in the implementation of disarmament measures,

working towards mutual confidence, placing a human perspective on disarmament, maximizing public security and promoting a culture of peace.

A. Assisting in the implementation of disarmament measures

13. Cooperation among Member States and intergovernmental organizations is essential to the attainment of the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. In the area of weapons of mass destruction, States in the Latin American and Caribbean region continued to be active through renewing their commitment to implementing OAS resolution AG/RES.2107 (XXXV-0/05), entitled "The Americas as a biological- and chemical-weapons-free region". In this context, the Centre joined forces with the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, the 1540 Committee, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), among others, to create regional platforms that foster and promote exchange of information and cooperation opportunities, as illustrated below.

1. Assistance and protection network

14. The Centre celebrated the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention through a series of activities relating to the universalization of the Convention and the promotion of its implementation throughout the region. For instance, the Centre continued to support the National Multisectoral Chemical Weapons Council (CONAPAQ) in Peru by providing technical assistance for the development of the Chemical Weapons Regional Assistance and Protection Network, designed to assist States in the implementation of article X of the Convention.

15. In addition, the Centre continued to cooperate with OPCW on the development of this network, which once established, will facilitate the collection of information on the training, equipment, medical support, and trained staff capacities of States in the event of a chemical weapons attack or threats thereof in the region.

2. Renewing regional commitment to non-proliferation

16. In February 2007, Latin American and Caribbean States celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (the Treaty of Tlatelolco). The Government of Mexico organized an official ceremony on 14 February 2007, in Mexico City. On the margins of this ceremony, the Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Mexico and the treaty secretariat (OPANAL), organized a forum for the participants to discuss the importance of peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education.

17. The outcome of the discussions will be reflected in the recommendations made by the Council of OPANAL and other States Parties consulted on the design of a joint project of the Centre and OPANAL on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education. A series of consultations will take place during the remainder of 2007 with a view to drawing up activities to be carried out as soon as possible.

3. Promoting implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

18. Implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) has received much attention from States in the region as a result of the organization of four subregional/regional workshops since 2004, in Guatemala (2004), Argentina (2005), Peru (2006) and Jamaica (2007). The Centre provided technical and logistical support to the organization of the seminar in Peru and participated in the Caribbean workshop in Jamaica in May 2007.

19. The seminar in Peru, entitled "Implementing United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Latin America and the Caribbean", was held on 27 and 28 November 2006 in Lima. The seminar was hosted by the Government of Peru, organized by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and sponsored by the European Union and the Government of Spain.

20. Approximately 50 participants from governmental sectors, mainly from Latin America and the Caribbean, and international, regional and subregional organizations took part in the seminar. They addressed, among other things, the current status of implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in the region; exchanged views on national and regional implementation experiences; and discussed action plans and the setting of priorities for implementation, as well as assistance and cooperation requirements.

21. The participation in the seminar of the 1540 Committee experts enabled States to be provided with first-hand information on how to prepare the national reports required under the resolution and how to elaborate specific country action plans.

4. Disarmament as a humanitarian action

22. From 23 to 25 May 2007, the city of Lima hosted a global conference aimed at the establishment of an internationally legally binding instrument banning cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians. It was attended by representatives of 68 States, 10 international organizations and more than 30 NGOs. A total of 13 Latin American and Caribbean States participated. The participation of the Centre in this conference enabled it to understand better the evolution of States' positions on this issue, as well as to explore areas of possible future assistance that the Centre could provide.

B. Working towards mutual confidence

23. The hemispheric road map leading towards the achievement of sustainable peace and security was enhanced when States of the region came together in October 2006 for the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas. This year's debate and dialogue included the importance of ongoing collaboration for strengthening democratic values, enhancing transparency and increasing bilateral cooperation, notably on issues involving the development of defence and security policies, as well as reporting on military procurement.

24. The Centre participated in the conference and distributed the defence white papers guidelines developed by the United Nations, which serve as a framework for joint cooperation and assistance, for example in the development of the current

defence white paper of Peru. These guidelines will also be used in new cooperation with the Dominican Republic for the development of its defence white paper.

25. A strategic relationship was initiated between the Regional Centre and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies on this occasion to promote dialogue among interested countries and to explore the linkage between priority issues of Ministers of Defence of the Americas and the ongoing work of States, as well as that of regional and international organizations.

C. Placing a human perspective on disarmament

26. Illicit firearms trafficking fuels the violence associated with drug trafficking, terrorism and organized crime and threatens public security on a daily basis in Latin America and the Caribbean. Indices of armed violence caused by firearms are continuously on the rise in the region, in particular in large urban centres. Armed violence is a constant and growing threat to social order, good governance, democracy and even the rule of law.

27. The Centre sought to translate the concept of disarmament and development into practice during the reporting period by partnering forces with the UNDP country offices in Brazil, Costa Rica and Jamaica, among others, to design and implement disarmament projects directly related to community development and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. This has provided new opportunities for States to enhance their response in the areas of good governance, citizen security, armed violence prevention and security sector reform. Special attention, such as collaborative efforts with the governmental Inter-institutional Committee on Small Arms in Costa Rica, was also given to analysing the impact of armed violence on various aspects of society, in particular the education and the health sectors.

D. Maximizing public security

28. The Centre's assistance to States in the area of firearms, ammunition and explosives has been directed at fostering ways and means of improving existing controls over their legal trade and of preventing their illicit trafficking. During the reporting period, the Centre's regional clearing-house programme focused on enhancing the effectiveness of the law enforcement community, reinforcing the policing services apparatus and improving cooperation between civil society and governmental agencies so that they may respond effectively to threats posed by firearms trafficking and violence and augment public security.

29. On the margins of the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006, the Centre organized a meeting of interested States and members of the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism to explore the link between human security and public security approaches in dealing with the impact of firearms violence on community development. CASA members also discussed among themselves ways and means to harmonize CASA field activities carried out during the reporting period in Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

1. Strengthening and harmonizing national legislation

30. It has been recognized that there is a need for a multisectoral approach to address the firearms problem in the region effectively. In this respect, during the period under review, the Centre received requests from Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Peru for technical assistance for the creation and/or strengthening of their respective multisectoral national firearms commissions. This assistance entailed the sharing of lessons learned, best practices and expertise. In addition, related support for the revision of national firearms legislation and its harmonization with both regional and global instruments was requested by Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru. In this connection, the Centre reviewed and updated a comparative analysis of national legislation in 19 Latin American countries and is currently reviewing and updating a similar comparative analysis of legislation of States in the Caribbean.

2. Promoting information exchange

31. In order to meet the ever-increasing demands of Member States for detailed and thorough information-gathering and sharing on firearms-related issues, the Centre continued to maintain and update its online resource tools and databases containing information on all relevant firearms legislation and decrees, as well as focal points and activities in the region.

32. With the assistance of the Centre and using the online resource tools, the Government of Paraguay presented the first national report relating to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials during the CIFTA Consultative Committee meeting held on 19 April 2007 in Washington, D.C. A similar assistance package for Peru was completed by the Centre on 23 July 2007 and is expected to be presented to the Consultative Committee during 2007.

33. A pioneering United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime/CASA-led pilot assistance project culminated in February 2007 in the development by the Centre of a "dummy" model electronic platform for the monitoring and promotion of the implementation of the Firearms Protocol to the Inter-American Convention by the Mercosur States. This inter-agency assistance initiative also included a comparative legislative analysis of the four Mercosur States, several consultative meetings and a subregional workshop for the Mercosur States, held in Asuncion, from 6 to 8 November 2006 to promote implementation of the Firearms Protocol.

3. Enhancing national capacity-building measures

34. States and NGOs in the region made a determined commitment to enhance coordination and standardize training in the area of illicit firearms trafficking, with the understanding that such trafficking exacerbates the violence associated with terrorism, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.

35. The Centre, in coordination with Interpol, OAS and the University for Peace, assisted States in investigative techniques training for 617 officials in Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. An additional 34 training courses will be organized prior to the completion of this assistance initiative, including several joint courses for officials from countries with shared borders, which are expected to have an impact on public security, particularly in urban areas.

36. These training courses have created an increasingly robust and strengthened network of officials from the police, customs, the judiciary, the armed forces and other entities. As a result, in Paraguay alone, the seizure of illicit firearms amounted to more than a thousand firearms, over 3.6 million units of ammunition and more than 1.65 million parts and related materials.

37. Gender mainstreaming has become a cross-cutting component of all of the Centre's capacity-building initiatives. Over 40 female members of the law enforcement communities of Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay were trained in investigative techniques relating to illicit firearms trafficking. The participation of women in leadership roles in the Training the Trainers Combined Command Post was actively and persistently promoted by the Centre. During the reporting period, female officers were at the helm of the Command Post in Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Peru.

38. Another gender-related initiative supported by the Centre is an ongoing training methodology aimed at stimulating dialogue among various actors who design policy and advocate against illicit firearms trafficking. In this connection, the Centre organized a week-long national workshop for representatives of the Paraguayan Congress and their advisers from 21 to 25 May 2007 in Asuncion, on how to formulate firearms legislation that integrates gender and youth-related perspectives.

39. The event also incorporated a one-day workshop for the NGO community in Paraguay to discuss issues of common concern relating to illicit firearms trafficking. The workshop provided NGOs with an opportunity to explore ways of translating their proposals into public policy. In this connection, the Centre agreed to facilitate the organization of four national Parliamentary Exchange Initiative workshops and 15 national NGO capacity-building workshops in Brazil, Colombia and Jamaica.

4. Preventive disarmament

40. Weapons destruction constitutes a very effective practical disarmament measure to prevent illicit firearms trafficking. Likewise, improvements in stockpile management are also important insofar as it ensures safeguarding of stocks. To further promote the concept of preventive disarmament and stimulate the exchange of information among States of the region, the OAS and the Latin American Social Sciences Institute (FLACSO) co-organized, with the support of the Centre, a regional seminar on weapons destruction on 8 and 9 November 2006 in Santiago.

41. Pursuant to the mandate established in OAS resolution AG/RES.2108 (XXXV-0/05), the OAS and the Centre were in close contact to advance the development of a best practice manual on weapons destruction and stockpile management for a series of national and subregional workshops to be held during the second half of 2007.

42. To facilitate the transition from theory to practice in the area of stockpile management, the Centre and its partners initiated a long-term assistance package for Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay to improve the security of firearms, ammunition and explosives stockpile facilities and to provide guidelines on the safe and secure integrated management of these installations.

E. Promoting a culture of peace

43. In celebration of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World and to raise awareness of the need for a new approach to disarmament issues, the Centre continued to promote the integration of peace education into community and scholastic activities in the region.

44. On 25 May 2007, in Asuncion, the Centre launched a video clip entitled "Peace soldier" with a song celebrating and promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, as well as the importance of resolving conflict through peaceful means. The video clip introduced a fictional cartoon character on a quest for sustainable peace to the Centre's peace and disarmament education programme.

45. For the third consecutive year, the Centre supported the "Pasacalle" initiative, organized by an NGO consortium led by Transparencia, which is aimed at complementing the celebration of the National Day of Peru (28 July) with folklore and culturally inspired activities. To the National Day celebration, characteristically consisting of military-style parades, were added folkloric dances, sports festivals and artistic exhibitions to increase awareness of a "culture of peace" among the general population, in particular the scholastic community, and more than 20,000 students participated; 362 national educational centres, national media, the Local Educational Management Office, and various NGOs were also actively involved. This innovative assistance resulted in the adoption of ministerial resolution 0352-2006 commending this alternative way of celebrating the National Day. The resolution also prohibits the use of toy guns or other replicas of arms in the National Day celebration. With the inception of the UNICEF, UNESCO and the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) country office in Peru, members of CASA, in the "Pasacalle" project, the project has become a new CASA initiative.

46. On 14 June 2007, a national workshop was organized in Lima by the NGO consortium for representatives of the Ministry of Education and school districts, with the aim of promoting the integration of a "culture of peace" into school curricula.

IV. Staffing, financing and administration

47. During the reporting period, the Centre underwent an internal structure change aimed at enhancing the capacity of the Centre to meet challenges and ever-growing demands. Specifically, the appointment of the Deputy-Director in May 2006 contributed to reinforcing relations with Member States and other United Nations agencies, facilitating the flow of information with Headquarters and strengthening the Centre's participation in inter-agency implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Further, the creation of the position of External Relations Officer contributed to enhancing donor relations and developing new fund-raising approaches.

48. During the reporting period, temporary staff were recruited to assist the Director in the development of monitoring tools and in carrying out impact evaluations upon the conclusion of projects and donor-funding cycles. These monitoring tools and evaluations are being developed at the request and recommendation of the donors.

49. Four Associate Expert positions in the areas of disarmament and development, weapons of mass destruction, confidence- and security-building measures, and peace and disarmament education remain to be filled at the Centre. Filling these positions will greatly contribute to strengthening the Centre's capacity and the Centre encourages Member States to identify candidates for the positions.

50. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/60 J of 3 December 1986, the Centre was established on the basis of existing resources and of voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations might make for its core and programme activities. During the reporting period, voluntary contributions in the amount of $1,999,063.49[1] were received. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of Colombia, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as the European Commission, for their generous financial contributions to and support for the activities of the Centre. The provision of timely financial contributions to the Centre by the Government of the host country on an annual basis is essential to ensure the continued operation of the Centre. The Secretary-General therefore urges the host Government to continue its commitment to provide financial and overall support to the Centre. Information on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre for the year 2006 is contained in annex I.

51. Complementary funding in the amount of $93,087.60[2] was also made available for the Centre's activities from the Global and Regional Disarmament Activities Trust Fund of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, $142,125.00[3] was received to support the Centre's activities in Colombia and in four Mercosur countries. These funds were co-administrated with other United Nations agencies as an inter-agency coordinated initiative. Through cost-sharing and in kind contributions by other United Nations agencies, as well as other governmental entities, the work of the Centre was made possible in seven States, namely Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude for these contributions in support of the activities of the Centre.

52. The lack of core funding, combined with the end of the current funding cycle of key donors and the completion of several projects funded by donors, constituted a significant challenge for the Centre during the reporting period. It is therefore proposed that Member States consider alternative means of ensuring stable core

---

[1] *For 2006*: Guyana $1,020; Mexico $5,000; Panama $1,000; Peru $60,000; and *for 2007*: Colombia $2,286; Spain: $269,100.00; Sweden $569,374.96; United Kingdom $232,892.15 and European Commission $858,390.38.

[2] *For 2006*: Trust Funds for the United Nations Global and Regional Disarmament Activities $93,087.60 (Spain $24,441.60 and European Commission $68,646.00).

[3] Paid to other agencies as an inter-agency coordination, $142,125.00 (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Brazil $45,741 and the Netherlands $96,384). The funds from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Brazil came to the Centre through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime/UNDP-Peru for preparatory assistance aimed at the ratification of the United Nations Transnational Organized Crime Convention and its third Protocol (Trafficking in firearms) by the following Mercosur countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The funds from the Netherlands were received from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Colombia for the training the trainers project in Colombia and were transferred to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Colombia for the coordination, organization and execution of activities for the training courses.

funding. Otherwise, the ability of the Centre to respond to the increasingly diversified and numerous requests from States could be seriously hindered.

V. Observations and conclusions

53. The Centre adjusted its organizational structure and operational approach in order to respond, in a rapid and flexible manner, to the ever-increasing number and varying nature of requests made by States. In accordance with the principle of "one United Nations system", the Centre contributed to the enhancement of a system-wide response to the implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) in various countries of the region.

54. In celebration of its 20th anniversary, the Centre is undertaking evaluations and analyses to measure the impact of its role as a catalyst, platform and service-provider in the areas of peace, disarmament and development.

55. Among the Centre's achievements during the reporting period, strengthened cooperation within the regional law enforcement community, as evidenced by the notable increase in information-sharing and reported seizures of illicit firearms throughout the region, was a tangible and measurable result of the standardized capacity-building training courses undertaken by the Centre and its partners.

56. The Centre's efforts in gender mainstreaming resulted in the increased involvement of women in key decision-making positions within the investigative techniques training command structures of States in the region, in addition to an increase in the number of female participants in the Centre-facilitated multisectoral training courses.

57. The promulgation of a ministerial decree in Peru prohibiting the use of toy weapons by children in schools during the preparation of national celebrations was yet another example of the direct impact of the advocacy and awareness-raising efforts of the Centre and its partners in the area of peace education.

58. These achievements were made possible through the combination of the Office for Disarmament Affairs support to the Centre's field activities, generous contributions from donor countries, the indispensable involvement of Member States and the strengthened partnership with regional and international organizations and NGOs.

59. Continued voluntary contributions earmarked for specific activities are essential to maintain the Centre's avant-garde programme of activities. Nonetheless, core funding for the operations of the Centre is of equal importance to ensure ongoing progress in programme implementation in the areas of peace, disarmament and development.

60. The Secretary-General calls for the continued and increased support and cooperation of Member States and organizations to sustain the effective operation of the Centre.

Annex I

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2006[a]

	(United States dollars)
Fund balance, 31 December 2005	698 274
Income, 1 January-31 December 2006	
Voluntary contributions[b]	1 056 100
Interest income	66 259
Other/miscellaneous income	93 622
Subtotal	**1 914 255**
Expenditures, 1 January-31 December 2006	1 396 296
Fund balance, 31 December 2006	**517 959**

[a] The information provided is based on the statement of income and expenditure for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2006. In 2006, contributions were received from Colombia ($4,143), Guyana ($1,020), Mexico ($5,000), Panama ($1,000), Peru ($60,000), Sweden ($507,731), the United Kingdom ($435,700) and the European Commission ($41,506).

[b] During the period 1 January-30 June 2007, additional contributions totalling $1,662,943 were received from Colombia ($2,286), Sweden ($569,375), the United Kingdom ($232,892) and the European Commission ($858,390).

Annex II

Planned activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for which funding is sought

Project I

Title

"Fostering debate on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation"

Purpose

The primary objective of this project is to promote dialogue within and between States concerning peace, disarmament and non-proliferation issues through national consultations and workshops. The project is aimed at sensitizing current decision makers to pressing peace, disarmament and non-proliferation issues in the region and at facilitating the elaboration of national workplans on peace education issues. In keeping with United Nations General Assembly resolution 57/60 of 22 November 2002, the project will also promote greater synergy between national and subregional disarmament and non-proliferation agendas, as well as support the development of more coherent and cohesive workplans in these areas.

Location

La Paz

Duration

Six months

Number of participants

Thirty-three countries of the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Cost estimates
(United States dollars)

Project personnel (4)	120 000
Operations and implementation costs	15 000
Travel of participants	35 000
Travel of experts	20 000
Travel of staff	20 000
Interpretation	10 000
Workshop documentation	10 000
Total	**230 000**

Project II

Title

"A dialogue on security matters for Latin America and the Caribbean"

Purpose

The main objective of the project is to promote dialogue among interested countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region on hemispheric defence and security matters during the intervals between the biannual Conferences of Ministers of Defense of the Americas. The project is also aimed at exploring the synergies between the agendas of the Conferences of Ministers of Defense of the Americas and the ongoing work of States and the regional and international organizations addressing the threats and challenges to hemispheric security. It will also provide an opportunity for the exchange of information between foreign and defence ministry representatives on priorities and concerns relating to defence matters. Finally, the project will enhance the Centre's ability to gather information and monitor trends in and the priorities of the region on issues of defence and security.

Location

Managua

Duration

Six months

Number of participants

Thirty-three countries of the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Project personnel (4)	135 000
Operations and implementation costs	15 000
Travel of participants	30 000
Travel of experts	12 000
Travel of staff	12 000
Interpretation	7 000
Workshop documentation	10 000
Total	**221 000**

Project III

Title

"Disarmament with a gender perspective"

Purpose

The main objective of the project is to enhance the understanding of decision makers (parliamentarians) of the impact gender plays in crime and armed violence, through strengthened dialogue between parliamentarians and women's organizations. The project will provide an opportunity for States, civil society representatives and others to address concepts of gender mainstreaming and disarmament matters and their implications for the social, economic and political development of the region. The project is also aimed at facilitating the design of national workplans to address the reduction of crime and armed violence and, finally, at creating a regional network on gender and disarmament for the Caribbean region.

Location

The Bahamas

Duration

Six months

Number of participants

The 13 countries of the English-speaking Caribbean region: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Project personnel (4)	120 000
Operations and implementation costs	15 000
Travel of participants	16 000
Travel of experts	20 000
Travel of staff	12 000
Workshop documentation	10 000
Total	**193 000**

United Nations A/62/131

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Item 64 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Social development: follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing

Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 61/142, the present report highlights national efforts taken to develop or strengthen national capacity on ageing, provides information on national, regional and global activities related to the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and analyses the status of international cooperation with respect to assisting Member States in their efforts to develop their capacity to implement the Madrid Plan of Action. In its conclusion, the report offers a number of recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

* A/62/150.

07-43441 (E) 130807

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	National implementation activities	3–33	3
	A. Institutional mechanisms	4–7	3
	B. National policy frameworks	8–11	4
	C. Legal and regulatory action	12–14	6
	D. Social protection programmes and care services	15–19	6
	E. Development of human resources	20–22	8
	F. Participatory bottom-up review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action	23–24	8
	G. The scope of national efforts: preliminary findings	25–33	9
III.	International cooperation in support of the development of national capacity	34–38	12
IV.	Regional activities	39–49	13
V.	Global activities	50–55	16
VI.	Recommendations for further action	56–59	17

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/142 of 19 December 2006, requested the Secretary-General to provide information on the commemoration of the five-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2007, and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

2. The report pays particular attention to the most recent national efforts in the area of capacity-building on ageing. The report also highlights some preliminary findings and lessons learned in this area during the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action. Owing to space constraints, the broad range of national experiences and practices can be only partially covered in the present report. It is expected that the remaining gaps may be filled at the forty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development when the present review and appraisal cycle is over. The report is based on the information received from Member States since February 2007 and on other sources available to the Secretariat.

II. National implementation activities

3. The preliminary information on the first five years of implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action provides evidence that national implementation activities have focused on a wide range of issues pertinent to ageing. Developing and building national capacity on ageing figures prominently on the agenda.[1] This section of the report provides information on implementation of national strategies or plans of action, including the efforts to mainstream the concerns of older persons into national development planning.

A. Institutional mechanisms

4. Since the adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2002,[2] Member States have created or strengthened various institutional mechanisms to facilitate policy development in the area of ageing, including the establishment of agencies dealing with ageing issues within various government offices, national committees on ageing and specifically appointed focal points on ageing within the Government.

5. In 2003, Brazil established a national council for the rights of older persons made up equally of representatives of civil society and of the Government. In January 2007, the Prime Minister of Canada appointed a Secretary of State for Seniors who will work alongside the Minister for Human Resources and Social Development and help to bring greater attention to the needs of older persons. In

[1] The Secretary-General, in his report to the sixty-first session of the Assembly (A/61/167), outlined the components of national capacity development that are necessary in the context of implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, including institutional infrastructure and mechanisms; human resources; financial resources; research, data collection and analysis; and policy development.

[2] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

September 2002, to implement the joint national plan for the older person, Chile created a national service for older people as a decentralized public office reporting to the President. The institution has an independent budget and aims at broadening public policies to promote the participation of older persons. In addition, a presidential advisory council on reform of the social security system has been created, with the tasks of collecting information on the situation of older persons and elaborating proposals to reform the national social security system.

6. In Finland, an older people's council exists in three fourths of all municipalities. In Indonesia, the responsibility for promoting the status of older persons was entrusted to the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1993. The institutional mechanism on ageing in Indonesia was strengthened by Presidential Decree No. 52/2004, which added national and regional commissions on ageing to assist the President in coordinating the implementation of national policies and programmes, as well as in rendering professional advice and formulating recommendations. In 2002, Mexico created a civic forum on ageing, which features the participation of civil society actors from both urban and rural areas. The forum strives to encourage older persons to become more active in society and to facilitate the interaction of relevant government agencies with civil society organizations in the area of ageing. New Zealand has established the Senior Citizens Advisory Council, an independent body that participates in the development of Government policy for older people by providing policy advice to the Minister for Senior Citizens. In Peru, a national network of older people was established. Its major objective is to implement the National Plan for Older Persons 2002-2006.

7. In Serbia, ageing-related policies have been carried out by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and by other public entities dealing with various facets of ageing issues, primarily in the area of social protection and health. Local community governments in Serbia are the leaders in planning and implementing local policy actions on ageing, with more than one third of the 165 local governments actively involved in the process. In Sweden, county councils and municipalities have set up older persons' advisory committees, as well as other local institutions to promote older persons' participation, including through meetings between politicians and representatives of organizations of older persons to exchange information. The Government also has a regular committee at the national level for conducting discussions and exchanging information with organizations for older persons. In 2003, Uganda set up a cross-ministerial, multisectoral working group with the task of mainstreaming ageing into health and nutrition policy. Representatives of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, as well as of two local non-governmental organizations, participated in the group's deliberations. Within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, a ministerial post exists for ageing and disability. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the national age care organization coordinates the work of various organizations involved in care for older persons.

B. National policy frameworks

8. Adopting a specific strategy or plan aimed at older persons highlights the importance of ageing in the context of national social policy. Existence of a plan on ageing helps to identify priorities and guide policy implementation, facilitating

subsequent legal or regulatory activities to benefit older persons, and to address the challenges and opportunities of population ageing in a country.

9. Older persons have been identified as a vulnerable group within the National Strategic Development Plan of Cambodia for 2006-2010. In 2006, China started implementation of the eleventh five-year plan for the development of undertakings for the elderly (2006-2010) and published a white paper on the plan. Despite challenges and constraints in existing pension and health insurance systems, China nevertheless adheres to the people-centred principle of continuing to improve social protection and safeguard the fundamental interests of older persons. In Finland, where the provision of services for older persons remains the responsibility of municipalities, 80 per cent of all municipalities have prepared a strategic policy paper on ageing designed by multi-stakeholder committees. In 2003, Indonesia set up the national action plan for elderly persons' welfare, covering the years of 2003-2008, while a medium-term national development plan for 2004-2009 specified that older persons must benefit from protection and social welfare efforts. Japan formulated the General Principles Concerning Measures for the Ageing Society, including such sectors as work and income, health and welfare, learning and social participation, and the living environment, which served as a fundamental and comprehensive set of guidelines for the Government to follow.

10. The Lao People's Democratic Republic approved the first national policy for the elderly in 2005. The sixth national Socio-economic Development Plan (2006-2010) also addresses the issues related to older persons in the context of social security and proposes an improved pension scheme for retired government officials. Lithuania approved a national ageing strategy in June 2004, with two priority targets: income guarantees for older persons and employment of older persons. The strategy also envisages the participation of older persons in addressing their own concerns. Malawi has formulated a national strategy for older persons whose objective is to increase older peoples' productivity, independence and active involvement in the development of their communities and the country. Mali adopted a national plan on ageing in 2005 and is now working with specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to implement it. Mexico included objectives and actions based on the Madrid Plan of Action in the national strategy for social development, which draws attention to equity and equality throughout the life-course, from infancy to old age. In Mongolia, the National Programme on the Health and Social Welfare of the Elderly (2004-2008) adheres to the main principles of the Madrid Plan of Action.

11. A strategy called "Health of Older People" was developed in New Zealand by an expert advisory group in consultation with older people. It identifies key objectives and actions to be undertaken by policymakers, service funding agencies, planners and providers to achieve identified goals by 2010. Qatar prepared a national plan of action for older persons, which will cover the period 2008-2013. In Serbia, a partnership between the Government and non-governmental organization networks facilitated the development of a national action plan on ageing. The national action plan on ageing has also been integrated into the poverty reduction strategy paper, which is essential for its implementation. Thailand is implementing the Second National Plan for Older Persons (2002-2021), which focuses on the preparation for "quality ageing" by promoting the well-being of older persons, including through social security measures, and on research to support policy and programme formulation. In South Africa, a recently adopted plan of action on

ageing has been translated into legislation. The plan focuses on community-based care and social protection of older persons, and ensures that older persons remain in the community with their rights respected. In 2003, the United Republic of Tanzania put into place the National Ageing Policy to guide implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. The Government has also taken steps to review and scale up the provision of pensions for older persons.

C. Legal and regulatory action

12. Many countries passed specific legislation geared at promoting social inclusion and the well-being of older persons. Regulatory and legal mechanisms were established, providing a basis for further action and serving to increase the range and scope of social services aimed at older persons.

13. A special law — *Estatuto do Idoso do Brazil* — was adopted for older persons in Brazil. In Chile, a draft law was elaborated, which sought to amend the law on intra-family violence, including older persons as specific, vulnerable subjects and designating their abuse as a form of domestic violence. The Government was also creating mechanisms for social protection in order to guarantee the rights of older persons. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea passed a law on the care of the elderly in 2007. The law addresses such issues as support and care, health services and cultural and social activities for older persons. Ecuador (ley especial del anciano en Ecuador), Mexico (law on the rights of older persons), Paraguay (ley de las personas adultas en Paraguay), Peru (ley que incluye la atención preferencial de las personas mayores) and Uruguay (ley de promoción integral de los adultos mayores en Uruguay) adopted legislative acts to promote the equality of older persons, employment in satisfactory conditions and improvements in the area of economic security; fair access to health services and the supply of medicines; regulation of the provision of long-term care; and measures against abuse or neglect of older persons.

14. South Africa enacted the Older Persons Act No. 13 of 2006, which paved the way for the inclusion of protection measures, the prioritization of services and the upgrading of the quality of services to older persons. In February 2007, fundamental reforms of the system of retirement provisions were announced, geared at preventing and alleviating poverty during old age. Spain recently approved a new law to promote personal autonomy and care for dependent people to assist vulnerable persons in need of help in their daily living activities so that they can attain greater personal autonomy and enjoy full civil rights.

D. Social protection programmes and care services

15. In 2003 in Argentina, non-contributory pensions were extended to all individuals age 70 and over who were not receiving a pension or retirement payment, had insufficient monetary income and whose families were unable to provide adequate support. In 2006, the Social Security System Inclusion Programme (Programa de Inclusión Previsional) was established. In Bangladesh, national poverty eradication policies specifically target older persons, and the old age allowance programme has recently increased coverage, with approximately 1.6 million out of 5 million older persons age 60 and above receiving the benefit. In

2002, Bolivia established the supportive bond (bono solidario, or Bonosol) that provides monetary income to people over 65 years old as part of a more complex institutional framework that includes integral attention and promotes active ageing and the rights of older persons. Bolivia recently established free medical insurance for older persons without social security coverage. The human rights of older persons are at the heart of Brazilian policymaking aimed at implementing the Madrid Plan of Action. Recent measures have included the regulation of nursing homes and the provision of interstate rights for using public transportation. In addition, the Rural Workers' Assistance Fund (FUNRURAL) grants pensions to older persons in rural areas who lack retirement rights and have insufficient material resources.

16. To improve the quality of life of older persons, Canada implemented the Tax Fairness Plan, which benefited seniors by increasing the tax shelter for persons over 65 years of age. In November 2006, amendments to the legislation governing public pensions were introduced. Partnering with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Health Agency of Canada coordinates efforts to determine best practices for the inclusion of older persons in emergency preparedness planning, emergency response and recovery. In Chile, the national fund for older persons was created in 2003 to finance civil society initiatives involving older persons. The Government has also implemented preventive measures to avoid unnecessary institutionalization of older persons. The measures include consultations at home by teams of primary health-care workers and training and community support for caregivers. A stipend is given to persons who qualify as poor and who are being taken care of by their families.

17. The pension reform of 2005 in Finland shifted pension entitlements towards later stages of working persons' careers. A flexible retirement age has been set between 63 and 68 years, while the age of early retirement was changed from 60 to 62 years. Incentives to delay retirement were introduced, including a sharply increasing rate of accumulation in the pension for those staying at work beyond the age of 64. The Government of Indonesia, in the context of ensuring the protection of older persons' basic human rights, recently implemented pilot projects in five provinces to address the needs of bedridden older persons. In Japan, a subsidy to employers has been introduced, instituting a system that permits employees to continue working after their retirement or to postpone their retirement. Amendments have been introduced to the national pension law, including an indexing mechanism, which would allow employers to take into account the changes in the old-age dependency ratio.

18. Mexico created a human development opportunities programme, which helps families that live in extreme poverty realize their potential and enhance their options to attain higher levels of well-being through improved education, health and nutrition. A component of the overall programme targets older persons age 70 and above living with their families, providing a monthly grant to cover the costs of medical services to older persons.

19. The Government of New Zealand announced the introduction of a Supergold card for seniors in August 2007. The card offers easy access to public sector entitlements and local government services. Cardholders will also be able to use their card to enjoy commercial discounts with participating businesses. In Sweden, a general tax credit for earned income — the "job tax credit" — has been introduced.

To increase the economic incentive to work longer, there is a higher tax credit for those over 65 compared to other age groups. A maintenance support for the elderly act, intended for persons 65 years and older whose basic needs are not satisfied through other benefits in the national pension system, came into force in January 2007. In Zambia, efforts are being made by the Government to address the needs and concerns of older persons by enhancing inclusion, empowerment, participation and improved social protection measures. Specific measures include waiving fees for health-care services and establishing home-care services. Public welfare assistance reached 115,000 older persons in 2005.

E. Development of human resources

20. The development of human resources is a key element in any capacity-building effort. It encompasses investment in formal training for the acquisition of skills as well as facilitation of informally sharing already existing skills.

21. In Brazil, the prevention of abuse and violence against older persons is a key focus of specialized training programmes to prevent social exclusion and violence. Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Programme funds community-based projects in which older persons can share their skills, knowledge and experience with others. The programme has funded over 1,700 projects across the country. Cuba adopted a comprehensive programme for older persons, which has promoted training in geriatrics and gerontology and the creation of 432 gerontology teams.

22. In Finland, the comprehensive training of nurses is a particular innovation aimed at responding in a holistic way to both the health-care and other assistance needs of older persons. Nurses with special skills are becoming the leading frontline professionals in health-care services for older persons. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Health established an elderly health-care programme under which health personnel receive training in providing care to older people. The Government has also provided various opportunities for information and communication technologies retraining and lifelong education as well as job placements to enable older persons to be economically productive. In Mongolia, the Gerontology Centre was established in 2005 by the Government under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health to provide training activities in the field of ageing and to conduct research on ageing issues. In Thailand, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security has recently piloted a project on home care for the elderly, 2003-2004 to provide training to home-care workers. The objective is to train volunteers in home care for the elderly and strengthen the capacity of community and village volunteers to be able to take care of older persons to enable them to lead a normal life in their families and in their communities.

F. Participatory bottom-up review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action

23. Following the decisions of the Commission for Social Development, the bottom-up participatory approach will be used to review and appraise the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action at the national level. The participation of older persons in the process of qualitative policy evaluation will enhance the potential for obtaining reliable data through quantitative censuses and surveys. In

addition, participation in reviewing and appraising policies on ageing could empower older persons to contribute more to the political process from a grass-roots perspective.

24. New Zealand has already accumulated experience in bottom-up evaluation of some of its national policies that could be shared with other interested Member States. The Centre for Social Research and Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Development started a research project that included fieldwork and used a case-study approach with interviews with older people living in the community. The project is investigating the factors that support people to age in place and will identify how Government can best support that process. Another project on improving the safety of older pedestrians explores the perceptions and needs of older people through their participation in focus groups and also incorporates the perspectives of professionals who are in a position to improve road safety for the growing population group of older people. A representative sample of community-dwelling adults aged 55 to 70 years will be surveyed over time by postal questionnaires and interviews, with follow-up every second year. The Office for Senior Citizens regularly consults with older people in the community through a network of 39 volunteer community coordinators. The volunteers programme, which was established in 1999 during the International Year of Older Persons, brings together people from different cultures, backgrounds and community organizations to participate in projects that contribute to policy development. The volunteer community coordinators network provides a key link between the community, the Office for Senior Citizens and the Minister for Senior Citizens.

G. The scope of national efforts: preliminary findings

25. Since the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002, Member States have made remarkable progress in developing capacity on ageing by creating a legal basis and institutional mechanisms, social protection programmes and care services as well as by developing human resources to address demographic ageing. The evidence suggests that those steps are essential and should complement each other. Careful planning and sequencing of steps is of paramount importance: without reliable data, adequate institutional infrastructure and the cooperation of stakeholders, policies developed for older persons can hardly be effective. For example, a lack or a shortage of trained personnel makes it difficult to implement an adopted plan, strategy or national policies. In addition, adequate funding to support implementation measures is required for legislation to become operational. Periodic evaluation to measure the effectiveness of laws, policies and programmes is an indispensable part of any successful policy process. In the context of developing capacity, Member States have set specific goals and topical priorities that differ from country to country. Careful analysis of the most pressing needs of older persons is a necessary prerequisite in making decisions with respect to identifying areas for action that would be most important.

26. The capacity-development policies presented in the preceding sections of the report contain pertinent information for Member States that have only partially engaged in capacity development for older persons. There are several lessons that have been learned in the last five years. Focal points on ageing, set up at the national level as an integral part of various government ministries or departments or as a separate independent entity, have played an essential role in carrying out ageing

policies. A competent and devoted national focal point on ageing with clearly defined responsibilities can and should have a say within a government structure and effectively lobby policymakers on issues pertaining to older persons, including the setting of priorities and the allocation of funds. In addition to advocacy functions, a focal point can serve as a coordinator, repository of information, spokesperson on ageing matters and a link between Government and civil society. The role and functions of focal points should be clarified at the onset of their establishment to avoid confusion and duplication of effort. Obstacles to success of focal points often relate to a lack of interest in ageing and/or ignorance of the issues at the national level as well as to their inadequate financial base.

27. National laws and regulations that ensure the individual rights of older persons in a variety of areas are an indispensable part of the institutional machinery, providing a legal basis for the process of empowerment and ensuring more comprehensive social policies that are better attuned to the needs of older persons. Formerly, it was expected that the Government alone would decide on priorities. It is increasingly being recognized that a more participatory approach is advisable, in particular one that involves older persons themselves. The involvement of all segments of society is of special significance for the adoption of non-discriminatory policies and practices. Providing a "space" or permanent forum for dialogue between Government and representatives of civil society is crucial to ensure that the opinions of older persons as well as representatives of the academic community and other stakeholders are heard. A more inclusive policy process that envisions government entities as proactively encouraging and facilitating participation by citizens enhances the reach, effectiveness and legitimacy of the adopted policies, and facilitates the realization of internationally agreed goals and human rights commitments. Views of older persons together with evidence provided by the experts in the field of ageing can clarify immediate concerns and necessary areas for further action, including the provision of funds for ageing-related programmes.

28. In both developed and developing countries a strong emphasis should be placed on health promotion at all stages of life to minimize the risks for chronic disease. This is, by far, the most cost-effective strategy that can be undertaken. Heart problems, diabetes, hypertension and obesity, the most potentially disabling diseases and risk factors, are often interrelated, and in many cases they can be prevented or minimized through behaviour changes. The consequences of not implementing effective prevention programmes can be grave even though they are often underestimated.

29. Family remains the main caregiver in developing and developed countries alike. However, the nature of family support may differ in essential ways, depending on national circumstances: from hands-on care in some countries to emotional and psychological support in countries offering more generous public services. Family support is usually consistent with the wishes of older persons themselves, who above all else wish to avoid nursing homes and other forms of institutionalization. Government help to provide support to family caregivers makes good sense in providing for current and future ageing populations. There are different types and levels of family support that can be adopted in national circumstances, ranging from the simple provision of information to the provision of long-term care insurance under national social protection systems. A synergy is needed between informal and formal care.

30. Severe opportunity costs and trade-offs for women, who constitute the large majority of caregivers, need to be recognized. To the extent that women cannot enter the labour force because of their caregiving responsibilities, they may be potentially prone to poverty-stricken old age for themselves owing to a lack of employment income and pension credits. Countries that seek substantial labour force participation must provide services for the care of both children and older persons. Nursing home and other forms of institutional care are usually viewed as the opposite of family care; however, they should be seen as part of a continuum; there are times when there is no other recourse than nursing home placement. Where the industry is well-regulated and monitored, residential care can provide high standards of care and protection. In some countries, nursing homes are extending their services by organizing the provision of community care or by providing day or respite care. An important lesson for developing countries is to avoid repeating the mistakes of some more affluent countries that simply built a lot of institutions for older persons. In many cases community care is a more effective solution. Even in cases where there is no recourse but to institutionalize, such efforts should be adapted to the local culture and not just follow previously established patterns. Homes organized around a village community concept, for example, may be much more welcoming than some of the hospital-style nursing homes.

31. An increasingly important issue is where one finds qualified staff to perform long-term care functions. Increasingly, developed countries are importing medical and caregiving staff from developing countries, often placing a strain on health-care provision in the latter. It is not infrequent in developing nations for older persons to be left behind while daughters migrate to the developed world to become long-term care providers. Some of this migration is undocumented, raising issues about the quality of care that results from a lack of training and supervision. Globalization of the long-term care workforce entails both opportunities and risks to sending and receiving countries and is an issue deserving more attention and international collaboration.

32. The most important policy interventions mentioned by Member States in their submissions and in other relevant national material reflect the priorities identified five years ago in the Madrid Plan of Action: providing adequate income support, health care and long-term care, transportation and employment for older persons; enabling their political participation, social involvement and active contribution to the development of their communities; preparing for emergency situations and battling abuse that may affect older persons; and training health-care providers in gerontology and geriatrics. Periodic evaluation of the results and of unintended policy outcomes will allow for adjustment of adopted policies and programmes.

33. Positive practices from all over the world show that since the time of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, forward-looking policy planning and broad-based implementation with the participation of all stakeholders, combined with effective monitoring and evaluation, have been pivotal in achieving successful and lasting outcomes in areas specific to ageing. The setting of achievable goals is as important as the selection of appropriate policy tools. A visionary yet realistic approach and the adoption of evidence-based policies supported by the provision of sufficient financial resources are necessary ingredients for achieving a higher quality of life for older persons.

III. International cooperation in support of the development of national capacity

34. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has continued implementation of the Development Account project entitled "Capacity-building to integrate older persons in development goals and frameworks through the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing". The initial activity under the project, involving the countries of Cameroon, Grenada, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Trinidad and Tobago, and Senegal, was a project workshop held in Bangkok from 9 to 12 December 2006. The aim of the workshop was to introduce participants to the objectives of the project and set out the framework for activities in 2007. As a follow-up, technical assistance in the area of ageing was provided to the Ministry of Women, Family and Social Development in Senegal in May 2007. A joint mission by the Department and the subregional office of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago was fielded to Grenada in June 2007 with the purpose of undertaking a needs assessment and analysis of the situation of the policy on ageing in that country, including proposals for project follow-up. The Department, in cooperation with the regional office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Bratislava, undertook a needs assessment mission to Armenia in April 2007 to provide advice and recommendations on how the Government could develop a national strategy on ageing, including a comprehensive needs assessment and an awareness-raising campaign.

35. In June 2007, the Department, in cooperation with the International Institute on Ageing, organized an expert group meeting policies on ageing at the national level: challenges of capacity development in Malta. The expert group meeting was convened in the context of work currently being undertaken by the Department on the preparation of a guide for national implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

36. The United Nations Population Fund is being called upon more often at the country level to assist in the development of policies and programmes on ageing. The Fund's regional office in Bratislava and the Economic Commission for Europe jointly organized in Chisinau a training workshop on ageing — a challenge and an opportunity — for the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, from 13 to 16 March 2007. The objectives were to improve the understanding of how to identify and analyze challenges and opportunities related to ageing and provide guidance for drafting country reports on national follow-up to the Madrid Plan of Action. In China, the UNFPA office is providing support for a review and participatory appraisal of the implementation of the existing Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly, which is scheduled to be revised in 2007. In Romania, UNFPA is working with parliamentarians to raise awareness of population issues, including ageing, and to devise activities for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. Funding has been provided by UNFPA to support the International Institute on Ageing in Malta, including training courses for policymakers organized by the Institute.

37. The International Labour Organization (ILO) deals with issues of ageing in the context of its various programmes, particularly social protection programmes. The

global report in follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, entitled *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges*,[3] was presented at the 2007 session of the International Labour Conference. The 2009 session of the Conference will focus on employment and social protection in the new demographic context.

38. During the period 2006-2007, HelpAge International continued and extended its work on the citizen participatory monitoring project whereby older persons have received training and support to engage their own Governments on ageing policy and the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, focusing on the delivery of age-based entitlements to income and health care in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, India and Kenya. HelpAge publicized the methodology of the monitoring processes through its website and publications. At the present time, HelpAge is working with delegations of older people from at least 21 countries on the International Day of Older Persons. They will meet with their Governments and raise concerns and requests for implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. Further work in 2007/2008 will focus on cooperation with the African Union and the United Nations in expanding social protection in Africa.

IV. Regional activities

39. As stated in the Madrid Plan of Action, the regional commissions have a responsibility for translating the plan into their regional action plans; it was further stressed that they should, upon request, assist national institutions in implementing and monitoring their actions on ageing. The Madrid Plan of Action also stated that the Economic and Social Council could strengthen the capacity of the regional commissions in this respect.[4]

40. In its resolution 44/1, the Commission for Social Development requested the regional commissions to identify appropriate modalities for conducting the regional review and appraisal, encouraged the convening of regional review and appraisal activities, and invited interested Governments to offer support and assistance, including voluntary financial contributions, to support national action in the context of the regional implementation and the convening of regional review and appraisal activities and events.

41. It is also expected that the regional commissions, in accordance with the preceding request of the Commission for Social Development, will forward the findings of the first review and appraisal, along with identified priorities for future action regarding the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-sixth session in 2008.

42. Three regional conferences to review and appraise the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action will be conducted in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (Leon, Spain, 6-8 November 2007), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (Brasilia, Brazil, 4-6 December 2007) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (Macao, China,

[3] Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, Ninety-sixth Session, report I (B) (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2007).

[4] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 128.

9-11 October 2007) regions thanks to the support offered by the Governments of Spain, Brazil and China, respectively. Preparatory processes are under way in those three regions, including meetings of experts and preparatory consultations of stakeholders. The regional commissions, in accordance with their mandates and within available resources, are following different scenarios for promoting capacity development on ageing as well as for the review and appraisal of the Plan of Action. The information below highlights some efforts undertaken in those areas.

43. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), following the reorganization in 2006 that placed human and social development activities within the Human and Social Development Section of the African Centre for Gender and Social Development, is now in a better position to give wider attention to the issue of ageing in the region. The Commission addresses the issue of ageing through its work on HIV/AIDS and gender, where an increasing number of grandparents, particularly grandmothers, are being left to care for orphans of the pandemic in addition to losing the support they counted on from their children in old age — a situation that has caused serious social and economic problems for older persons and children. The Commission is preparing a comprehensive report on ageing in Africa. That report, together with several case reports from selected countries based on the bottom-up approach, will be discussed by an expert group meeting in 2007 with the aim of producing a consolidated report on the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in Africa.

44. The Economic Commission for Europe held a meeting of focal points on ageing in Segovia, Spain, in November 2006 to assist Governments in conducting the review and appraisal exercise of both the Madrid Plan of Action and the regional implementation strategy. The Commission and the Government of Austria also organized a joint meeting of the expert group and the task force on monitoring the regional implementation strategy, in Vienna, in February 2007. The task force is providing expert advice to the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the 2007 Ministerial Conference on Ageing, to be held in León, Spain, from 6 to 8 November 2007. Finally, from 12 to 13 July 2007, ECE held a meeting in Geneva of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. The open-ended intergovernmental committee will decide on the content and modalities of the Conference.

45. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has provided technical assistance on ageing to a number of countries in the region, including in the elaboration of a national policy on ageing, through an inclusive process involving all stakeholders. With the assistance of UNFPA and the Government of Italy, ECLAC has completed a study on future scenarios in ageing policies in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Uruguay. In Brazil, ECLAC supported the national council for the rights of older persons in the elaboration of priorities in implementing the national statute on the rights of older persons. As a result of that process, a plan of action for implementation that reflects the priorities agreed is to be produced. Technical assistance was also provided to the institutes on ageing in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The Commission has produced a manual of indicators on quality of life in old age, which will be distributed to all regional stakeholders working on issues of ageing. In addition, a set of baseline indicators on ageing are being elaborated in 20 countries of the region to reveal the sociodemographic characteristics of the ageing population between 1990 and 2000. A number of workshops were organized, at both the

national and regional levels, on the issue of quality of life indicators in old age. The Commission is also working to integrate issues of ageing into work taking place within ECLAC in a variety of sectoral areas. For instance, a study regarding the health of older persons has been inserted into a Development Account project entitled "Interregional cooperation to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goal process". The Commission also issued a guide for the preparation of country reports on the application of the regional strategy for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean. The guide is provided to national bodies on ageing to support countries in the elaboration of the reports that they will present in the second regional intergovernmental conference on ageing.

46. In the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region, funding for international assistance to support national capacity development on ageing has been scarce. Only a few Governments in the region cite ageing as a priority. The population is still predominately young.[5] However, in a number of countries in the region, such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, where the demographic transition is starting to have an impact, ageing is moving to the forefront of policies and programmes in the social area. Although some progress has been made in policy development and mainstreaming, the prevailing approach to ageing still tends to favour welfare- and service-based policies and programmes. Cross-sectoral coordination of the policies and programmes that do exist remains a daunting task (see E/ESCWA/SDD/2007/Technical Material.2). ESCWA is also considering the organization of a regional meeting in connection with the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

47. During the period 2004-2005, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific concentrated on carrying out research and national training workshops to identify modalities for conducting the review and appraisal exercise that is appropriate for the region. Guidelines and indicators have been developed, and training has been conducted for Government officials and national partners. Within that context, the National Training Workshop on Tracking Progress to Improve Health Care Needs of Older Persons was held in Jakarta in August 2005 to contribute to the development of a national bottom-up appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action to supplement statistical surveys in the areas of long-term care and well-being in old age. In addition, indicators and other assessment tools were developed to measure the impact of social protection and health-care policies and programmes.

48. An expert group meeting on setting the agenda of the high-level meeting of the regional review of the implementation of the Shanghai implementation strategy for the Madrid and Macao plans of action on ageing was organized by ESCAP and held in Shanghai in June 2006. That meeting aimed to help in the review and appraisal process and focused on ageing and development issues. The participants also developed a provisional agenda for the high-level meeting.

49. In addition, the Expert Group Meeting on the Regional Preparations for the Global Review of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing took place in Bangkok in March 2007 and focused on developing supportive environments. The participants

[5] See *World Population Policies, 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XIII.5).

also revisited the bottom-up review process and clarified the role of national focal points in the process. The high-level meeting on the regional review of the Madrid Plan of Action will take place in Macao in October 2007.

V. Global activities

50. The Commission for Social Development started the first review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing during its forty-fifth session in 2007 by conducting a plenary debate and a panel discussion on progress and challenges in the area of ageing since the adoption of the Madrid Plan of Action in 2002. During the plenary debate, the delegations presented the initial review of their national actions taken since the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002, including the identification of priorities in their efforts to implement the Madrid Plan of Action. Several Member States presented their national reports, describing national implementation measures taken since 2002. The individual country reports are available on the website of the United Nations Programme on Ageing (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/review_map.html).

51. During the interactive panel convened at the forty-fifth session of the Commission, the panellists emphasized that the impacts of ageing on societies are widespread, holding important implications for, among other things, economic growth, health-care systems, social protection measures, the labour market, families and communities, and globalization. It was stressed that links needed to be strengthened between the Madrid Plan of Action and key international policy objectives, such as poverty reduction strategies, the Millennium Development Goals, the decent work agenda and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Such linkages would also help to mainstream ageing into the policy discourse.

52. Three fundamental areas were highlighted at the panel discussion. The first involves financial security, either in the form of non-contributory social pensions or more traditional contributory social protection schemes, so that older persons have a regular income on which to live. Rather than being viewed as a cost, social pensions should be viewed as an important investment in development, one which pays dividends to families, communities and the overall economy. The second deals with health promotion, including an emphasis on preventive care and effective management of chronic conditions, as well as on adequate training of health-care providers in geriatric medicine and an expansion of home-care services and support to family caregivers. Healthy ageing not only enhances the quality of a person's life, but is also far more cost-effective and less of a strain on public health systems. The third area addresses issues of participation and empowerment of older persons so that they can have a meaningful voice in the policies and programmes that affect them, rather than being sidelined and subject to discrimination. Organizations of older persons can provide an entry point for engaging in policy dialogue and also help to ensure that people receive the benefits and services to which they are entitled. A general consensus among the panellists was that successful implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, particularly in developing countries, hinges on the development of national capacity in carrying out ageing policies. To that end, Governments in developed countries, civil society and international organizations can assist in providing training and advisory services during the review and appraisal process.

53. In addition to the plenary discussion and interactive panel, numerous side events took place, highlighting the issues of ageing and older persons from various social policy perspectives: for instance, the Global Ageing Programme of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), in collaboration with the United Nations Programme on Ageing, organized a briefing series on recent major developments and trends in such areas as income security for older people; health and ageing; and the empowerment of older persons and creation of enabling environments.

54. In the context of the commemoration of the Madrid Plan of Action, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has devoted the sixtieth edition of its flagship publication, the *World Economic and Social Survey, 2007: Development in an Ageing World*,[6] to analyses of the implications of ageing for social and economic development around the world. The report addresses the issues of relationships between demographic ageing and economic and social situation in various parts of the world, as well as the place and role of older persons in societies at different stages of development.

55. Numerous activities and events on ageing have been conducted or are being planned around the world to address a number of priority issues included in the Madrid Plan of Action, thus providing useful input to the independent assessment of its implementation. For example, the International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (IAHSA) organized its seventh international conference in Malta in June 2007 around the central theme, "Quality transcends borders: innovations in leadership, technology and design". Demographic change and its effect on the labour market and social security, health issues, the development of new products and markets and changing lifestyles in society are the topics on the agenda of the third World Ageing and Generations Congress, organized by the World Demographic Association at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. The International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) is conducting in 2007 a series of regional conferences, including the sixth European Congress of Gerontology in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation and the eighth Asia/Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in Beijing. The Congress in St. Petersburg is being organized within the framework of the Research Agenda on Ageing for the Twenty-First Century, a joint project of the United Nations Programme on Ageing and the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics aimed at supporting the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action.

VI. Recommendations for further action

56. On the basis of the information available to the Secretariat, the present report provides an overview of some national, regional and global activities related to the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in the midst of the first cycle of its review and appraisal. The conclusions of the first cycle of the review and appraisal will be drawn by the Commission for Social Development at its forty-sixth session in February 2008. **In this connection, the General Assembly may wish to recommend to the Commission to focus the deliberations of its forty-sixth session in 2008 on the outcomes of the first cycle of the review and appraisal, including identifying progress made and obstacles encountered during the first**

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.II.C.1.

five years of the implementation process, as well as selecting priorities for further implementation activities. In addition, the General Assembly may wish to remind Member States to actively participate in the participatory bottom-up approach of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, through, inter alia, the sharing of ideas, data collection and best practices, and reporting on them to the forty-sixth session of the Commission in 2008.

57. Given the key role that the regional commissions are playing in consolidating the national findings of the review and appraisal, regional aspects of the review and appraisal process should be featured prominently at the Commission's session in 2008. **This could be achieved through, inter alia, organization of a special panel with participation of high-level representatives from the regional commissions, and representatives of organizations of older persons from various regions that are directly involved in the participatory bottom-up review and appraisal exercise.**

58. Given the continuing significance of national capacity for implementing the Madrid Plan of Action, **the Assembly may wish to recommend to Member States to redouble their implementation efforts on developing national capacity to address the national implementation priorities identified during the review and appraisal exercise. Member States, which have not done so, may wish to consider a step-by-step approach to developing capacity or to fill gaps to strengthen particular elements within their national capacity. Such a step-by-step approach would include the setting of national priorities, the strengthening of institutional mechanisms, research, data collection and analysis, and the training of necessary personnel in the field of ageing. A strong focus on legislation and subsequent policy and programme development to implement national objectives, as well as periodic quantitative and qualitative evaluation of policy implementation should be encouraged.**

59. **The General Assembly may also wish to request the Secretary-General to prepare a strategic implementation framework based on an analysis of national activities since 2002 to provide identification of policy priorities for the future. In addition, such a framework could include the identification of measures for international cooperation to support national implementation activities.**

United Nations A/62/132

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Item 64 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 60/133 of 16 December 2005.

The report addresses the issues of integrating a family perspective into policymaking and national capacity development in the area of family and provides information regarding the continued follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, paying particular attention to the information on actions and experiences concerning family issues submitted by Member States.

The activities of the United Nations Programme on the Family are also highlighted. The report concludes with suggestions and recommendations concerning areas for future consideration by the General Assembly.

* A/62/150.

07-43453 (E) 100807

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–3	3
II.	Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond: integrating a family perspective into policymaking and national capacity development	4–22	3
	A. Considerations for integrating a family perspective into policymaking	6–12	4
	B. National capacity development	13–14	5
	C. Integrating a family perspective at the international level	15–22	6
III.	Action taken at the national level concerning family issues	23–63	7
	A. Institutional aspects	24–35	8
	B. Strengthening policy action through family research	36–41	9
	C. Creating a conducive environment to strengthen and support families	42–63	11
	1. Equality between men and women, respect for all the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members and addressing and preventing intrafamily violence	43–49	11
	2. Reconciliation of work and family life	50–53	12
	3. Upbringing and development of the child	54–57	12
	4. Social service provision	58–63	13
IV.	Follow-up by the United Nations Programme on the Family	64–69	14
V.	Conclusions and recommendations	70–73	17

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 60/133 of 16 December 2005, entitled "Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the same resolution at its sixty-second session. The present report was prepared in response to that request and in the context of the follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

2. To facilitate the preparation of the report the United Nations Secretariat addressed to all Member States a note verbale, dated 20 April 2007, seeking information on the implementation of activities related to General Assembly resolution 60/133. As of 2 July 2007, a total of 24 responses to the note verbale had been received from Governments. Responses were received from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, the Russian Federation, San Marino, the Sudan and Thailand. These responses form the basis for much of the present report. The information received was too extensive to be included in its entirety owing to space limitations. The report, therefore, provides a brief synthesis of recent actions taken by those Governments that responded to the note verbale.

3. The report addresses the issues of integrating a family perspective into policymaking and national capacity development in the area of family. It then provides summary information on action taken at the national level concerning family issues, including national family policymaking, family research and creating a conducive environment to strengthen and support families, including such issues as social service provision, equality between men and women, upbringing and development of children, detecting and preventing intrafamily violence and reconciliation of work and family life. After a review of the activities of the United Nations Programme on the Family, the report concludes with conclusions and recommendations for future consideration.

II. Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond: integrating a family perspective into policymaking and national capacity development

4. The observances of the tenth anniversary fulfilled the important functions of celebrating family and promoting the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. These objectives were to: (a) increase awareness of family issues; (b) strengthen the capacity of national institutions to formulate, implement and monitor policies; (c) stimulate efforts to respond to problems affecting, and affected by, the situation of families; (d) undertake, at all levels, analytical reviews and assessments of the situation and needs of families; (e) strengthen the effectiveness of efforts at all levels to execute specific programmes concerning families; and (f) improve collaboration among national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in support of families.

5. The observances also served to strengthen political commitment to the issue of the family and to emphasize the importance of family as well as effective family programmes and policies. While the formal observances of the tenth anniversary of

the International Year of the Family have passed, the importance of the issue of the family to Member States, the United Nations and civil society remains. Family issues and the desire to strengthen the family's recognized and crucial role as the basic unit of society remain important priorities for countries all over the world.

A. Considerations for integrating a family perspective into policymaking

6. Awareness-raising on a range of family-related issues is one of the most important elements of any successful family policy. A significant part of integrating a family perspective into policymaking, whether at the national or international level, is for policymakers to know about the approach as well as cross-sectoral issues. Policymakers need to approach policies not only from the perspective of how individuals, communities or societal groups will be affected by them, but also from the perspective of how the individuals' families and households may be affected, whether directly or indirectly, recognizing the strong influence of family on levels of well-being.[1] In this regard, the stated objective of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family to increase awareness of family issues, including integration of a family-oriented perspective or approach into policymaking, is a crucial first step.

7. In addition to awareness-raising, other significant steps in the implementation of a comprehensive approach to family policies are conducting family research and analysis on issues or policies, both sectoral and cross-sectoral, from a family perspective and applying the results to policy decision-making. All welfare-enhancing policies have family connotations, and the objective of creating truly comprehensive social policies cannot be achieved in full unless family is part of the initial considerations and basic assumptions. Strengthening the connection between social science research and social policy can lead to better overall social policy, better family policy and increased well-being. Including a family perspective into social policies renders them more comprehensive and permits them to achieve more effective and lasting outcomes.

8. In some cases, research and analysis from a family perspective could be fairly straightforward, as the issues may relate directly to the many functions that families perform, such as childbearing, childrearing and other forms of family caregiving, or to family assistance or legal considerations, such as financial assistance to families in need or interventions in the case of intrafamily violence.

9. In other cases, the situation may be more complex, particularly when policies may have indirect impacts on families that may be difficult to anticipate at the outset. Many countries have established strong working relationships and partnerships between family researchers and Government ministries affecting family policy, and have established a direct link between family research and family policy deliberations and policymaking. In the case of complex issues, this approach could include having an analysis carried out by government or academic researchers or by having an overview of relevant family research presented directly to policymakers.

[1] For effects of family on well-being, see, for example, Mary Daly and Richard Rose, *First European Quality of Life Survey: Key Findings from a Policy Perspective* (Dublin, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007).

10. Many government ministries commission reports or studies on specific issues, conduct their own national family research or family diagnostics, and have staff who stay up-to-date on recent academic studies and publications. An additional approach or mechanism is the use of family impact seminars to have academic family researchers speak directly to policymakers, such as parliamentarians and their aides, government service agency personnel, administrators of family-serving organizations and representatives from government ministries. This often involves an ongoing series of periodic seminars, briefing reports, newsletters, and follow-up discussions with the aim of providing objective, solution-oriented information targeted at bringing a family focus to policymaking and emphasizing the benefits of taking into account the role of the family in addressing social and economic issues. For example, in the United States these seminars are currently being used by 23 state governments, where family impact seminars are being conducted by family researchers from state universities to inform state legislators and other state-level family policymakers.[2] Other countries have established other types of links and partnerships.

11. Many of the policy issues dealt with at the national level would not be considered either purely or primarily family policy issues, such as issues relating to persons with disabilities, older persons or youth; health and health-care issues; specific public health issues, such as combating diseases such as HIV/AIDS or addressing intravenous drug use; education; labour policies, including labour regulations and the promotion of full employment and decent work, the criminal justice system; and even public transportation. Yet the effectiveness of the proposed policies pertinent to the above-mentioned sectors may nonetheless benefit from a family perspective and a more comprehensive approach.

12. Integrating a family perspective into such issues could involve the asking of some simple, straightforward questions to assess how policies and programmes might benefit from a family perspective. Examples of such questions could include:[3] Are families part of the policy issue, and if so, to what extent? How are families affected by this issue? Do families need to be involved in the policy response? How could or should families be taken into account in this policy or programme? The answers to these and other family-related questions may facilitate the inception and implementation of national social policy.

B. National capacity development

13. Integrating a family perspective into policymaking can be a significant challenge for any country. It requires vision, political will and a strong commitment. Developing countries are faced, however, with the additional challenge of augmenting their national capacity in family policymaking, usually under the constraints of having significantly less resources available to devote to this capacity development as well as to the implementation and monitoring of family policies.

[2] For additional information on integrating a family perspective into policymaking through family impact seminars, see Karen Bogenschneider, *Family Policy Matters: How Policymaking Affects Families and What Professionals Can Do* (Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2006), as well as the Policy Institute for Family Impact Seminars web site, at http://familyimpactseminars.org/ (accessed on 2 July 2007).

[3] Questions presented in Karen Bogenschneider, op. cit., p. 295.

National capacity development in the area of family and family policymaking continues to be a major concern of developing countries.

14. International cooperation on family issues may assist countries to build national capacity to develop and implement policies that respond to the situation and challenges facing families in specific national circumstances. To facilitate cooperation within the United Nations system in strengthening national capacities, the United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies must continue to actively consider and search for ways in which to integrate a family perspective into their activities.

C. Integrating a family perspective at the international level

15. In its resolution 60/133, the General Assembly encouraged Governments to continue to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the International Year of the Family and also to integrate a family perspective into policymaking.

16. A recent example of an integration of a family perspective at the international level is well demonstrated by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 2006 (resolution 61/106) and opened for ratification on 30 March 2007. The Convention integrates family into the preamble and two relevant articles, and also includes a separate article focused specifically on family issues related to persons with disabilities.

17. In particular, the preamble states that the States Parties to the Convention are convinced that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State, and that persons with disabilities *and their family members* should receive the necessary protection and assistance *to enable families* to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities [emphasis added].

18. Following the preamble, article 8, Awareness-raising, then speaks about adopting measure to raise awareness throughout society, *including at the family level*, regarding persons with disabilities. Article 22, Respect for privacy, states that no person with disabilities shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy *family*, home or correspondence or other types of communication [emphasis added].

19. Article 23, Respect for home and the family, then addresses specific issues relating directly to family and persons with disabilities, including eliminating discrimination against persons with disabilities relating to marriage, family and parenthood; ensuring the rights and responsibilities with respect to children; ensuring that children with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life; and ensuring the protection of children with respect to separation from their parents and, if necessary, to alternative care.

20. In other areas at the international level, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals are strongly related to family. A range of family-related considerations are certainly implicit in the Millennium Development Goals, even though the word "family" is not mentioned. For instance, the goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases are strongly

related to family. Incorporating a family perspective in policies designed to meet these goals may make these policies more effective.

21. In 2005, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs published a global study entitled *Living Arrangements of Older Persons Around the World*.[4] This was in response to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing[5] adopted in 2002, which called for research on the advantages and disadvantages of different living arrangements for older persons, including familial co-residence and independent living, in different cultures and settings. The study includes family perspectives in examining the living arrangements of older persons. As more people survive to reach old age and those who attain old age are living longer than before, a consequence is that families comprising three or even four generations have become common, considerably expanding the alternatives for living arrangements of older persons. At the same time, long-term shifts in economies and societies are transforming many aspects of day-to-day family life, including traditions favouring lifelong co-residence of parents and children as a basic means of ensuring support for young and old.

22. Given the strong linkages that exist between employment and family issues, there are important opportunities at the upcoming forty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development, where the priority theme is "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", to reflect a family perspective in a policy outcome document. Employment is an intergenerational issue, is linked directly to the economic and financial security of families through the employment of parents, and implicitly affects younger family members. The decent work agenda, including such issues as child labour, working hours, and work-life balance, interacts with family dynamics and has direct implications for families, parenting, child welfare and the quality of family life. In this respect, there may be room for the integration of a family perspective into the policy aspects of the priority theme of the Commission.

III. Action taken at the national level concerning family issues

23. In its resolution 60/133, the General Assembly addressed several issues to Governments. These items can be broadly grouped into three categories: institutional aspects, such as national family policymaking, coordination and the integration of a family perspective into policymaking; strengthening policy action through family research; and creating a conducive environment to strengthen and support families. The present section of the report reflects the information on actions and experiences concerning family issues provided by Member States under these three general headings and also includes a fourth on other related actions and issues.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.XIII.9 (ST/ESA/SER.A/240).

[5] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

A. Institutional aspects

24. In addition to encouraging Governments to make every possible effort to realize the objectives for the International Year of the Family and to integrate a family perspective into policymaking, the General Assembly invited Governments to maintain the national coordination mechanisms established or revitalized during the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Year in order to coordinate family policies, programmes and strategies. It also invited Member States to undertake a review of the role and functions of existing national machineries for the family in order to better integrate family issues into national development programmes. The General Assembly also invited States, inter alia, to address family-related concerns within the framework of the commitments undertaken at relevant major United Nations conferences and in their follow-up processes.

25. Responses received by the Secretariat highlight national efforts in this regard and illustrate various institutional dimensions of national family policies through which countries coordinate activities and services for the family and integrate a family perspective into policymaking.

26. In Azerbaijan, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs was established in early 2006. One of the main objectives of the Committee is aimed at forming and pursuing the State policy on family issues. This has included the creation of a unique database and information system on families. The Committee also works in cooperation with other governmental bodies, such as the Ministry of Justice. Azerbaijan also adopted, in 2006 and 2007, several legal acts regulating family relations, as a continuation and follow-up to the adoption of a new Family Code in 2001.

27. Burkina Faso is following the recommendations of the African Union to develop a plan of action for the promotion of the family. It has also implemented several activities to raise public awareness on family issues and to communicate to the public, through various organized activities and through television and radio, information regarding the promotion of the family and social and legal measures to protect it. In particular, the Government has made use each year of the celebrations of the International Day of Families to raise awareness, organizing each year the observances in different regions of the country. The observances include information on such issues as health and HIV/AIDS, and have been used to register births, conduct marriages and issue national identity cards for social protection services to persons in vulnerable situations.

28. The Czech Government is implementing its Action Plan for Support of Families with Children 2006-2009. This Plan was preceded by a National Report on the Family in 2004, which was prepared by the Family Policy Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with academia and NGOs, as well as a National Concept of Family Policy document, prepared in cooperation with an external group of experts, which designated principles and defined priorities of family policy for the Action Plan. The Ministry also held an international conference on family policy in 2006 entitled "Comprehensive Family Policy as the Priority of the State: Is the Czech Republic a Family-Friendly State"?

29. Germany held an international conference that included discussion and debate with Eastern European accession States about visions, perspectives and possible cooperation for a European family policy.

30. Nigeria has begun an initiative to produce and implement a multisectoral Plan of Action on the Family in Nigeria, modelled after the African Union Plan of Action on the Family in Africa, to strengthen and harmonize family-centred policies and programmes. A critique workshop for stakeholders on the zero draft is scheduled for August 2007.

31. Peru approved a National Plan of Support to the Family 2004-2011, passed a law on family strengthening in 2005, established the General Office of the Family and Community within the Ministry of Women and Social Development to oversee family issues and created a multisectoral commission for the implementation of the National Plan.

32. The Philippines is in its second year of implementation of its National Decade Plan for the Filipino Family 2005-2015, which is the country's guide to fulfilling its commitments to the objectives of the International Year of the Family. In order to carry out such functions as formulating and coordinating family policies, plans and strategies and conducting research, a National Committee on the Filipino Family was created in 2003, composed of 16 national Government agencies and 17 non-governmental entities. The Committee also works to strengthen national capacity to implement and monitor family policies.

33. Portugal created recently two new entities functioning within the structure of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity with specific competencies in family-related areas. One is the Consultative Council of Families, whose main task is to promote and guarantee civil society participation in the process of development of family policy and evaluation of their impact on families. The other is the Commission for the Promotion of Family Matters, which was created within the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity to mainstream family interests into the political agenda and to promote the intervention of various ministries within the process of development and evaluation of family policy.

34. The Sudan is implementing the first current five-year period of 2003-2008 of its Strategy for Women and Families for the Twenty-five Years to Come. It is also implementing a National Family Strategy, whose objectives are to protect the family and promote its role in society, and a policy of capacity-building and development for the family, which includes combating female illiteracy and ensuring that educational opportunities and the educational system are in line with the needs of family and society.

35. Thailand formed the Family Institution Development Policies and Strategies 2004-2013. The policies and strategies were approved by the Cabinet in May 2007 covering the four main strategic areas of holistic family potential development, family social safety nets, strong family management system and social network empowerment. Thailand also established, in 2003, the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family Development, chaired by the Prime Minister or a designated Deputy Prime Minister, to be in charge of proposing policies and plans to promote the potential of women, gender equality and family institutional security.

B. Strengthening policy action through family research

36. In its resolution 60/133, the General Assembly recommended that Governments, in cooperation with concerned academic and research centres as well

as relevant non-governmental organizations, encourage action-oriented research that addresses public policies with a family perspective and contributes to the development of strategies, policies and programmes aimed at strengthening the economic and sustainable livelihood of families.

37. In this regard, Austria's Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection contains a Unit for Men's Affairs that has commissioned numerous studies specific to men and a men's policy.[6] This is part of Austria's approach to deepen gender mainstreaming, which requires the active involvement of men in gender and family policy and includes the role of fathers in the reconciliation of family and work. The scientific research into interests and problems specific to men forms the basis for working with men and provides a component of policy advice in the area of gender policy. Research published by the Unit for Men's Affairs include a survey of men's policy as well as separate studies on the consequences of divorce on men, male suicide, father deprivation, boys and youth studies, positive fatherliness and male identity, ethical and psychosocial aspects of male health and the reconciliation of family and work from a men-specific point of view. The Unit also published the outcome document for the First European Fathers' Conference held in 2004.

38. In early 2006, Mexico's National System for the Integrated Development of the Family presented the results of an interdisciplinary research project that it had coordinated and conducted from 2003-2005 entitled "Diagnostic of the Mexican Family". Consultations on the results of the Diagnostic were held in an inter-institutional round table that included Government institutions in their role as coordinator of the study and of the implementation of the study's proposals and recommendations, civil society organizations, enterprises, academics and representatives of churches and various religions. The Diagnostic is comprised of several studies and databases, including statistical information on Mexican families and homes, a national survey on family dynamics, an analysis of family legislation in Mexico and a study on the public policies that affect families. Consultations were also held in early 2007 to hear specific public policy proposals to benefit families.

39. Current research and action has also been directed to fatherhood and men's role in the family. Mexico has drafted and implemented a National Family Education Model that trains fathers in various skills and knowledge that will contribute to the strengthening of the family.

40. Peru is undertaking, in the National Institute of Statistics and Information, a survey on demography and family health to collect information and data over a period of five years. Peru's Ministry of Women and Social Development has also financed several research projects on intrafamily problems, including violence and sexual abuse, in order to develop adequate strategies for the application of policies on the protection and promotion of the family.

41. Thailand's Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, in cooperation with the School of Human Ecology of Sukhothai Thammathirat University, has conducted research regarding a situational analysis and policy study for assisting

[6] The information regarding Austria's Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection comes from a submission in 2007 of information and reports to the United Nations Programme on the Family prior to the issuance of the Secretary-General's note verbale of 20 April 2007.

special families. This research includes case studies of single-parent, teenage-parent and homeless families, studying first the situations, risks and problems of these families. The research then analyses government policies and practical methods that support these special families and recommends appropriate policies and measures to respond better to their particular needs.

C. Creating a conducive environment to strengthen and support families

42. The General Assembly, in its resolution 60/133, also urged Member States to create a conducive environment to strengthen and support all families, recognizing that equality between women and men and respect for all the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members are essential to family well-being and to society at large. It also noted the importance of the reconciliation of work and family life, and recognized the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child.

1. Equality between men and women, respect for all the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members and addressing and preventing intrafamily violence

43. Brazil's New Civil Code of 2003 abolished the concept of "concubinage" and introduced the concept of "family power" that reinforces equality of rights and duties of fathers and mothers. Brazil also has a Programme to Combat Domestic and Family Violence, and a bill is currently being discussed in the National Congress to establish 6 December as the National Day for Mobilization of Men to Bring an End to Violence Against Women.

44. In Cyprus, the principle of gender equality is integrated in all laws concerning the relations among spouses and the relations between parents and children. Men and women, both as spouses and as parents, have the same rights and responsibilities in the family. Cyprus is also a State party to many international instruments concerning the legal protection of the family.

45. In the past three years, Croatia has prepared and enacted several strategies, campaigns, laws and protocols, such as the National Strategy of Protection against Family Violence 2005-2007 and Rules of Procedure in Cases of Family Violence, the National Campaign to Combat Family Violence Against Women (following the recommendation of the Council of Europe) and the National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children 2006-2012. It has also set up county family centres and a network of advisory centres for victims of family violence.

46. The Dominican Republic has been seeking to improve the status of women, protect women against gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace and to protect all family members from intrafamily violence through the passing and modification of laws governing these issues and through the creation of a National Council for Combating Intrafamily Violence. In addition, the Dominican Republic has also linked explicitly its family policy to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

47. Egypt passed, in 2004, a law concerning family courts with a view to spread the concept of human respect, dignity and equity and equality between both genders

as well as another law concerning alimony sums and the enforcement of alimony judgements in the case of divorce and abuse settlements.

48. San Marino observed the 2007 international Day of Families with the theme "Safeguarding children who are the victims of violence". This was organized during its period as chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from November 2006 to May 2007 as an initiative within the pan-European campaign to prevent and combat violence against women, including domestic violence. In particular, an analysis was carried out regarding the right of children to be protected from direct or indirect violence and the risks they face when they are witnesses of domestic violence.

49. In 2005, the Sudan enacted an article to its constitution equalizing and ensuring the same rights to both men and women, including establishing the equality of rights between two spouses and the equality of women in the workplace. This was followed in March 2007 by the enactment of a policy for the advancement of women with the goal of giving the necessary means to women to ensure their rights.

2. Reconciliation of work and family life

50. In Chile, concern over recent significant changes in family composition, work and social relationships has led the Government to produce a code of good labour practices and non-discrimination. One major guideline of the code seeks to promote greater compatibility between work and family, and has led to initiatives, such as alternative work arrangements, to facilitate the exercise of the parental responsibilities of both parents. Chile has also passed recent family legislation, updating laws on intrafamily violence, breastfeeding at the workplace, provisions for employees to take care of sick children, paternity leave and employment protection of single-parent fathers.

51. The Czech Republic is initiating several measures to improve the balance between work and family life, including introducing more flexibility into the labour market for parental and maternity leave and work hours, reforming the tax and social system to reinforce family solidarity, reinforcing the role of the father in childcare and improving services for children.

52. Portugal has implemented initiatives to reconcile work and family life, including leave arrangements and the protection of women and men in the workplace, and by making a large investment in childcare services in 2006.

53. San Marino has also taken measures to reconcile work and family life issues, and the Dominican Republic emphasized, in their submission, the relationship between economic crises or difficulties and the time spent working by parents, taking away from the care of their children.

3. Upbringing and development of the child

54. In Belarus, changes have been enacted in recent years to improve the marriage and family code, ensure the rights of the child and to provide benefits to families who are raising children. The Government is currently implementing the programme Children of Belarus 2006-2010 in conjunction with its National Programme of Demographic Security. The efforts of various State authorities are geared towards parenting and the provision of support in the education and upbringing of children. Financial benefits, including a birth benefit, are provided to families with the birth

and caring for children until age three, and additional tax benefits are provided to families with three or more children.

55. In Finland, childhood and family policy is one of the priority areas of the new programme, introduced by the Government in April 2007. The aim of the Government is to develop family policy so that it will secure the development of children in all circumstances. With respect to the development of services for families with children, Finland has family centres that organize primary services, such as maternity and child welfare clinics, day care and school. The focus of the work of a family centre is on reaching children and families in need of support and addressing problems at an early stage.

56. Japan began implementing, at the end of 2004, the Child Care Support Plan to specifically carry out the major measures stipulated in the General Policies of Measures for a Society with Fewer Children, which was prepared as guidelines for comprehensive measures to combat the decrease in the fertility rate. The Plan sets five-year measures and targets for 2009 for four major issues: raising independent youth and mentally healthy and tolerant children, supporting compatibility between work and family life, encouraging understanding of the importance of life and family roles, and providing support and collaboration for child care.

57. The Russian Federation has increased material support and introduced market-oriented voucher mechanisms to families for the birth of a child and for the upbringing of children. Since January 2007, a new childbirth benefit has been enacted where, after the birth of a second child and every child thereafter, the mother is given a "maternal voucher". This voucher represents a substantial amount of money and can be used towards improving housing conditions, education of children or as a contribution towards the mother's retirement pension. Another voucher, the "childbirth medical voucher", was also introduced in 2007. Expecting and new mothers can choose between different health-care establishments and use the childbirth voucher towards medical care for prenatal and birth medical services and for the care of the child during the first year of the child's life. The voucher finances medical services and serves as an added financial incentive to the health-care establishment to retain expecting mothers as clients by providing higher quality maternity and post-natal care.

4. Social service provision

58. In Brazil, the family is the guiding focus of social programmes and the Government has taken action in support of families and services to families. These actions include the Bolsa Familia family stipend programme of cash transfers to poor and extremely poor families provided that they comply with the conditions that their children have an 85 per cent school attendance rate and that mothers attend prenatal care to ensure adequate child development and vaccinations.

59. Bolsa Familia also represents a unification of an assortment of social programmes in order to integrate and streamline management and expand coverage while increasing the average value of benefits received. Other Brazilian social programmes benefiting families are the Family Health Programme, Integral Welfare Programme for Families, Family Agriculture Programme, National Housing Programme and Integral Women's Health-care Programme.

60. Egypt provides di ect services for families through family guidance and counselling offices located throughout the country. These offices are established by the Government and managed by a registered NGO or private foundation. Among the services they provide are guiding families towards the different services and resources available to families in the community, conducting studies related to the family, enhancing awareness of family issues and providing education and information on marital issues and reproductive health. Egypt is also providing accommodation services in neighbouring Arab countries to its expatriates, who are often young people living away from their families.

61. Iraq has a social protection network that has the objective to provide coverage and social protection to all persons and their families in difficult, precarious or vulnerable situations, including the unemployed, widows, orphans, divorced persons raising children, families of prisoners, older persons and students. The number of people who are beneficiaries of this social protection network rose, in 2007, to 750,000. Actions have been taken to increase awareness through a publicity campaign, improve service provision to families through an agreement signed with the World Bank in 2006 and increase accessibility via the opening of more offices.

62. Nigeria has embarked on a programme of material support to women-headed families, which are among the poorest, to enhance their earning capacity and open up opportunities for better education and health for their children.

63. The Philippines is implementing, through its National Decade Plan for the Filipino Family, programmes and projects to improve family access to basic social services, alleviate poverty, provide alternative family care for abandoned or neglected children and operate crisis intervention services. In addition, it is also implementing such family-oriented services as pre-marriage and marriage counselling, programmes to increase parent effectiveness and responsible parenthood, and training to enhance the knowledge and capacities of fathers in performing familial tasks.

IV. Follow-up by the United Nations Programme on the Family

64. The General Assembly, in its resolution 60/133, encouraged continued and increased inter-agency cooperation within the United Nations system on family-related issues, and encouraged the programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to identify focal points on family matters within their offices to support the integration of family issues in their work.

65. In this regard, the General Assembly, in its resolution 59/147, had invited the Secretary-General to disseminate, at the forty-fourth session of the Commission for Social Development in 2006, a compilation of existing development cooperation activities of the United Nations system in the field of the family. In response to that invitation, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs initiated written correspondence with the executive secretaries of the United Nations regional commissions and with the heads of relevant United Nations programmes, funds, specialized agencies, research and training institutes and other United Nations entities. The correspondence requested relevant information in regard to family-related activities, and further requested the name and contact information of family focal points responsible for family activities in the respective United Nations

entities, for the purpose of strengthening communications and the exchange and sharing of information.

66. Responses to the correspondence from the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs were received from the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Based upon the inputs received, the compilation was assembled and disseminated in February 2006 and provides information on activities in the field of the family for the benefit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, other relevant United Nations bodies, Member States and observers, and is available on the Programme on the Family website (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family).

67. In addition to assembling the compilation of existing activities in the area of the family, during the same exercise the Programme on the Family also assembled a compilation of the family focal points and contact persons from the inputs received. This list of focal points has already been quite useful for cooperation and the sharing of information, such as through the recent joint work between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ESCAP related to family. It has also been useful for referring requests related to either a particular region or language. For example, it was possible to refer requests from both a Government and an NGO from Latin America for information on family and the United Nations in their region and in Spanish to the focal point on family issues in ECLAC.

68. In its resolution 60/133, the General Assembly also called upon the United Nations Secretariat to continue its role on family issues within the United Nations system, and in that regard encouraged the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to continue cooperation with Governments, the United Nations system and civil society in strengthening national capacities through the implementation of the mandated objectives of the International Year of the Family. In this regard, the Programme on the Family has undertaken a range of activities since the submission, in July 2005, of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/60/155) on the follow-up to and celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond. These activities include the following:

(a) Provision of technical assistance to the Maldives in formulating a national family policy. The Maldives requested this assistance during the second half of 2006. A preliminary needs assessment mission was carried out in conjunction with another mission to the region. Two consultants from the region were then identified and recruited, based upon their knowledge and experience dealing with family policy issues as well as their familiarity with underlying cultural and religious issues and influences. The consultants conducted their first mission to the Member State in the first half of 2007 and continue to work with the relevant ministries in the formulation of the national family policy, with the objective of finalizing it within the next several months;

(b) Co-organization, in cooperation with ESCAP, UNFPA and the United Nations Programme on Ageing of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, of the Seminar on the Social, Health and Economic Consequences of Population Ageing in the Context of Changing Families, held from 25 to 27 July 2007 at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok. The Seminar brought together both regional experts and Government officials to address the impacts of ageing in the context of changing families in the region, integrating a family perspective into the discussions and policy recommendations on ageing;

(c) Organization, in cooperation with ESCAP as host, of a policy workshop entitled "HIV/AIDS and family well-being in South and South-East Asia", held from 6 to 9 December 2005 at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok. The workshop brought together representatives of Governments and NGOs as well as academic experts and practitioners from various countries in South and South-East Asia to discuss the changing situation of families in the region, to consider the ways in which families and communities are coping with the impact of HIV/AIDS, to contribute to the further development of a strategic policy framework to assist Governments to strengthen the capacity of families and family networks, and to assist Governments to integrate a family perspective into their policies on combating HIV/AIDS;

(d) The publication and dissemination in the second half of 2005 of a study by Mark A. Belsey on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the family, entitled *AIDS and the Family: Policy Options for a Crisis in Family Capital*.[7] This publication of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs integrates a family perspective into addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a family-based analysis and the recommendation of public policy initiatives;

(e) Observance of the International Day of Families (15 May) in 2006. The day was observed at United Nations Headquarters on 11 May 2006 under the theme "Changing families: challenges and opportunities". The 2006 observance was organized jointly with the NGO Section of the Department of Public Information with the participation of the New York NGO Committee on the Family, and included a presentation of the stamps celebrating the International Day of Families issued in May 2006 by the United Nations Postal Administration as well as a seminar on the theme. Speakers included representatives from Governments, the United Nations system and civil society;

(f) Observance of the International Day of Families (15 May) in 2007. In 2007, the theme was "Families and persons with disabilities", and was observed at United Nations Headquarters on 15 May 2007 with the assistance of the United Nations Secretariat of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the participation of the New York NGO Committee on the Family, which chaired the seminar held on the theme. Speakers at the seminar included a representative from Government and experts from disability community organizations;

(g) Co-sponsorship, with the NGO Health Committee, of a seminar entitled "Childbirth and early parenting experiences of some physically immobile mothers" in February 2007, organized by the NGO Health Committee, with the participation of the Programme on the Family as a side-event of the fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The seminar included presentations by an

[7] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.IV.1 (ST/ESA/288).

academic expert, a social worker practitioner and a personal account by a mother who is a wheelchair user;

(h) Participation and representation at conferences and meetings organized by Governments, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and academia. Representation included speaking and participating at: meetings of the New York NGO Committee on the Family in 2005 and 2006 in New York; a meeting of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family in Vienna in late 2005; two annual meetings of academics of the National Council on Family Relations in late 2005 and 2006 in Phoenix, Arizona, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, respectively; an international conference in Provo, Utah, in mid-2006; a family conference in Chesapeake, Virginia, in early 2007; a meeting of a civil society organization in Monroe Township, New Jersey, in early 2007; and an NGO briefing organized by the NGO Section of the Department of Public Information in 2007.

69. These activities provide important opportunities for Governments, family experts, NGOs, and other interested actors to exchange information, experiences and good practices. The information from these activities can be utilized by Governments in the formulation and implementation of family policies, programmes and activities.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

70. The present report highlights some recent national actions to strengthen and improve the well-being of families since the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and presents some recent activities of the United Nations Programme on the Family.

71. The family is the fundamental group unit of society and, as such, all social policies are family related. Given the rich universe of families, Member States use a wide range of policy instruments to address family issues and to promote family-related policies. In order to create truly comprehensive national social policies, family and family well-being must be a central part of the considerations and assumptions of policymakers and all other stakeholders. Research on family serves to provide a better understanding of family and of the range of options and rich menu of policy tools at the disposal of the State when family policies are conceived and implemented.

72. The present report has provided country information on family policy based upon submissions received by Member States. As shown by the information presented in their submissions, many Member States are carrying out a wide range of family policies to promote family well-being using several varied policy instruments.

73. In considering continued follow-up action to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations:

1. Aware that the Commission for Social Development, at its forty-sixth session in 2008, will be considering policy aspects and recommendations on the priority theme of "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", **the General Assembly may wish to invite the Commission for Social Development to integrate a family perspective into the Commission's proposed policy**

outcome document on the priority theme, and to also invite the Commission to integrate a family perspective into its consideration of other issues, such as youth and ageing.

2. Cognizant that integrating a family perspective into policymaking and coordinating family policies and activities require a conscious and sustained effort by Governments, **the General Assembly may wish to encourage Governments to continue in their efforts to integrate a family perspective into policymaking through either new, revitalized, or currently established mechanisms and to link them to the efforts and mechanisms utilized to coordinate family policies and activities. The General Assembly may also wish to emphasize the importance of partnerships between various national and international stakeholders in formulating and implementing family policy.**

3. Conscious of the importance of time spent by parents with their children for the well-being of families and particularly for the development, upbringing and well-being of children, and fully aware of the pressures and stresses of work and earning a living in all countries, especially those that have been affected by economic crises, **the General Assembly may wish to invite Governments to support families by developing a sustainable family-work system geared at reconciling work and family life and establishing and maintaining a viable balance between these two facets of life.**

4. Recognizing that national capacity development in the area of family policy is of utmost importance for developing countries and that international cooperation can help countries to build national capacity to develop and implement policies that respond to the situation and challenges facing families, **the General Assembly could encourage the programmes, funds and specialized agencies to continue to consider how they could integrate a family perspective in their activities to facilitate cooperation within the United Nations system in strengthening national capacities. It could also further recommend, for those United Nations entities that may have not yet done so, to identify a focal point on family matters within their offices. It could further request the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to be in communication with the focal points, updating the list of focal points, as appropriate, and to continue to build upon the recently disseminated compilation of existing development cooperation activities of the United Nations system to strengthen cooperation in the field of the family.**

5. Acknowledging the need for additional capacity-building at the national level to promote and facilitate the development and implementation of family policies, **the General Assembly could encourage Governments to support the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities to enable the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to provide expanded assistance to countries, upon their request.**

6. Recognizing the continuing need for data and in-depth research on the family and its functions, relationships and dynamics, and building on the experience of some countries that have undertaken family diagnostic studies and surveys, **the General Assembly may wish to recommend that Governments encourage research activities that provide input for public policies with a family perspective and strengthen policy through family research. Participatory methodologies and techniques could be used to elaborate the priority issues and**

needs of families, to identify the structures and composition of families and to collect opinions, attitudes and values of people of different generations. The Assembly may also wish to recommend that research activities of Governments in the area of family policies be supplemented with research and publications on relevant topics conducted and supported by the United Nations Programme on the Family.

United Nations A/62/133

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 July 2007
English
Original: Arabic/English/Russian/
Spanish

Sixty-second session
Item 100 (h) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

Page

I. Introduction ... 2
II. Replies received from Governments ... 2
Bangladesh ... 2
Brunei Darussalam ... 2
Chile ... 2
Cuba ... 3
Iraq ... 5
Lebanon ... 5
Mexico ... 5
Ukraine ... 6

* A/62/150.

07-43543 (E) 160807 160807

I. Introduction

1. On 6 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/62, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", in paragraph 8 of which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 23 February 2007, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[31 May 2007]

A nation acting alone cannot ensure the maintenance of regional or international peace and security. All nations should therefore take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of peace. As such, resolution 61/62 is a very timely step towards the promotion of international peace and security. Bangladesh fully shares the objective of the resolution.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[14 May 2007]

The Ministry of Defence of Brunei Darussalam has always supported United Nations activities aimed at enhancing its multilateral efforts in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in order to achieve global peace and security.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2007]

1. Chile is strongly committed to the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. We believe that this is a key instrument for the negotiation of these issues with a view to achieving a broad consensus. Chile is therefore actively participating in the relevant international forums and reiterates that both general and complete disarmament and non-proliferation are important and that one should not take precedence over the other. Unfortunately, this caused the failure of the most recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and affected the negotiation of the

2005 World Summit outcome document of Heads of State and Government meeting in the United Nations General Assembly. That document did not contain any reference to disarmament because of the profound differences between the nuclear Powers and the hard core of non-aligned countries.

2. We believe that it is necessary to continue to move forward in arms regulation, non-proliferation and disarmament on the basis of universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent negotiations with the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament under strict international control. This confers international legitimacy on the negotiations in these areas.

3. In this context, Chile calls for the improvement of disarmament and non-proliferation strategies and hopes to work towards the success of the review of the NPT in 2010. In addition, we will continue to make efforts to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament and work for the prompt adoption of an effective programme of work in such areas as negative security assurances, nuclear disarmament and the arms race in outer space. Chile also considers essential a prompt start to the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. Similarly, we reiterate the need for States to accede to the Model Protocol Additional to the Agreements between States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the Application of Safeguards, and for the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2007]

1. Cuba believes that multilateralism is essential today, especially in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. This issue has attracted the attention of the international community for several years within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 56/24 T of 29 November 2001 on multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and global efforts against terrorism, as well as resolutions 57/63 of 22 November 2002, 58/44 of 8 December 2003, 59/69 of 3 December 2004 and 60/59 of 8 December 2005, in which the overwhelming majority of Member States have shared the view that multilateralism provides the only reasonable and sustainable way to address disarmament and non-proliferation problems.

2. In this context, the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, during the First Committee's general debate at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, reflects the principled positions and priorities in the area of disarmament and international security adopted by the Movement's Heads of State and Government at the Conference held in Havana from 11 to 16 September 2006.

3. It is a matter of great concern to Cuba, and to the international community as a whole, that the current system of international relations is characterized by injustice, exclusion, aggression and pre-emptive and unilateral wars and that attempts are made to justify such actions with self-styled new foreign policy concepts and doctrines on the part of the most powerful countries.

4. The "effective multilateralism" advocated by certain States seeks to establish a new theory about the application and interpretation of the principles enshrined in international law and in the Charter of the United Nations from a utilitarian point of view, with a cost-benefit evaluation of a country's actions according to its political interests. In other words, multilateralism is useful only if it is used by a country to advance its own plans and interests.

5. This precept essentially makes a travesty of sovereign equality between States by promoting associations and agreements only between certain States that allegedly meet their standards for democracy and development, and by claiming the right to decide on the system freely chosen by each State in the exercise of its right to self-determination.

6. Cuba rejects this so-called "effective multilateralism" and affirms that its theoretical basis is contrary to the foundations on which international peace and security must be maintained because it promotes intervention as a norm and principle for the conduct of States in international relations.

7. In addition, the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative is designed to erode multilateralism by imposing a selective and non-transparent mechanism which acts outside the United Nations on the false pretext of providing "a response to the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials". The steps proposed by this Initiative are directed against those States and groups that have been deliberately identified as terrorists using a highly selective approach focused exclusively on the prevention of horizontal proliferation and lacking any firm or resolute commitment to general and complete disarmament or to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

8. Cuba is deeply concerned by the fact that the United Nations Security Council, a body with restricted membership, continues to assume prerogatives and functions which are not appropriate to it, especially in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) are examples of this.

9. The Republic of Cuba wishes to confirm the absolute validity of multilateralism in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and calls for the multilateral disarmament bodies to be preserved, owing to the major role that they are called upon to play in the quest for a more just, secure and peaceful world. It is imperative for the multilateral negotiating bodies and mechanisms in this field to be revitalized and to move forward collectively on the basis of unqualified respect for the principles enshrined in international law and in the Charter of the United Nations. Cuba repudiates the lack of progress made in the work of the Conference on Disarmament and in other multilateral forums in this field.

10. It must be frankly recognized that the reason for the lack of tangible results in the area of disarmament lies in the lack of true political will on the part of some States, especially the military super-Power. These States have demonstrated their rejection of multilateralism and disarmament and instead favour unilateral actions and selective non-proliferation.

11. Cuba believes that it is imperative to carry out substantive analysis and to produce tangible results in the field of disarmament in order to make the world a

safer place and to allocate the substantial military expenditures being made today to the cause of development and to reducing the gap between rich and poor countries.

12. In that respect, Cuba believes that it is entirely timely and relevant to recall United Nations General Assembly resolution 61/62 on promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, which reaffirms multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to maintaining and strengthening universal norms and enlarging their scope.

Iraq

[Original: English]
[19 March 2007]

Iraq supports the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation as an active way of achieving consensus in negotiations and as a reflection of the importance of Member States abiding by their commitments.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[1 May 2007]

In reply to your note verbale relating to the above subject, the Ministry of National Defence reaffirms its previous position contained in note No. 1378/*ghayn 'ayn/waw* dated 28 April 2006 stating that Lebanon supports the adoption of effective measures to counter the dangers that threaten international security and peace as a result of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Bearing in mind the existence of disarmament and arms regulation agreements resulting from multilateral negotiations with the participation of a large number of countries, regardless of their size and power, with the goal of reaching complete disarmament under strict international control, it believes that the promotion of multilateralism is a core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to establishing universal norms and enlarging their scope. It renews and fulfils its commitments to multilateral cooperation as an important means of pursuing and achieving common objectives in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation at a time when Israel's maintenance of an enormous arsenal of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a direct threat not only to Lebanon but to all States in the region, even endangering international peace and security.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[4 April 2007]

1. Mexico is convinced that multilateral negotiations in pursuit of consensus enable positive agreements and progress to be achieved in substantive aspects of the international agenda, especially in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Mexico is therefore joining the efforts to revitalize the disarmament machinery, which has recently encountered serious difficulties in the conduct of its work.

2. Mexico is also concerned by the absence of this issue in the 2005 World Summit outcome document. It therefore reaffirms that the United Nations plays a paramount role in promoting and conducting negotiations on the principles and the system governing disarmament and arms regulation, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Articles 11, 24 and 26. Mexico believes that disarmament is an essential element to include in the reform of the United Nations.

3. Accordingly, Mexico considers the disarmament and non-proliferation multilateral legal structure in place for nearly 30 years to be valid and to provide the basis for present and future progress in this field. The fulfilment of international obligations, verification, accountability and the promotion of cooperation for the same purpose are therefore important aspects. While multilateralism is a concept, this takes concrete form in an institutional system that must be revitalized and improved in order to eliminate threats to peace.

Ukraine

[Original: Russian]
[11 May 2007]

1. In Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence is responsible for drafting legislation and regulations relating to export controls for international transfers of military and dual-use goods.

2. It is also responsible for carrying out decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolutions on the imposition of sanctions on certain countries in the field of non-proliferation and export control, including the restrictions that Ukraine must observe or take into consideration when developing military and technical cooperation with foreign States.

3. Decisions allowing entities engaged in foreign economic activity, product development organizations and producers of goods to obtain licences for the export and import of military and dual-use goods are submitted to the State Export Control Service of Ukraine.

4. Ministry of Defence documents are drawn up and issued on whether to grant entities engaged in foreign economic activity, product development organizations and producers of military and dual-use goods the right to export and import these goods, as well as petitions to revoke these rights.

5. The Ministry of Defence also draws up and issues documents in order to obtain decisions from the State Export Control Service of Ukraine on the international transfer of military and dual-use goods for the participation of units of Ukrainian armed forces in international peacekeeping operations and in joint exercises with units of the armed forces of other States.

6. Representatives of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence participate in meetings of the Interdepartmental Council for Export Control under the State Export Control Service of Ukraine, and of the Commission for State Certification of In-house Export Control systems under the State Export Control Service of Ukraine.

United Nations A/62/134

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 July 2007
English
Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Sixty-second session
Item 100 (i) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Replies received from Governments	2
	Bangladesh	2
	Chile	2
	Costa Rica	3
	Cuba	3
	Lebanon	5
	Mexico	6
	Spain	7
	Syrian Arab Republic	9
	Turkey	10

* A/62/150.

07-43556 (E) 160807 170807

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 61/63, the General Assembly invited all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General information on the measures they have adopted to promote the objectives envisaged in the resolution and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing that information to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 23 February 2007, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[31 May 2007]

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh fully shares the objective of the resolution 61/63 and considers it as an important resolution for maintaining international peace and security.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2007]

1. Chile believes in the importance of the relevant environmental norms being observed in disarmament and arms-control negotiations.

2. In Chile, arms control is governed by Act No. 17,798, which is in the process of being amended. Our country is interested in participating in the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group, which constitute frameworks for the control of exports relating to conventional arms and biological and chemical weapons.

3. The principal legal text in force in the area of environmental norms is Supreme Decree No. 95 of 2001, article 3 (d) of which provides that nuclear reactors and establishments and related installations shall be subject to the environmental impact evaluation system.

4. Nuclear facilities are defined as plants that use nuclear fuels and materials and plants that process nuclear materials, including irradiated nuclear fuel processing installations. Related installations are understood to mean storage deposits for nuclear or radioactive materials for nuclear reactors or facilities.

Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]
[9 May 2007]

The Foreign Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship reports the following: (1) Costa Rica is a country with no army and no nuclear weapons; (2) a total of 9,121 small arms and light weapons were destroyed from October 2001 to August 2006; (3) the said destruction was carried out with the support and technical assistance of the United Nations Development Programme, which took charge of checking that the destruction of the weapons took place under security measures that complied with the requirements of the said process and verifying that the quantity of weapons earmarked for destruction matched those actually destroyed, in addition to providing some of the instruments required for the destruction operations; (4) the resulting waste is being kept in storage, awaiting proper disposal in such a way as not to produce any type of contamination of the environment.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[12 June 2007]

1. The Republic of Cuba wishes to place on record that for 12 consecutive years the United Nations General Assembly, with the support of the vast majority of Member States, has adopted a resolution on the observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control, an initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement that has the definite backing of our country's Government.

2. Cuba has accumulated extensive experience in the adoption and application of laws and policies that permit the observance of environmental norms in all the processes of social life, including their implementation in the various international instruments relating to disarmament and arms control.

3. In Cuba there exists a solid legal basis for the protection of the environment. Article 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba incorporates the concept of sustainable development. Act No. 81/1997 on the environment establishes the principles of Cuban environmental policy. Among those principles one finds the following: "Environmental management is comprehensive and cross-cutting. State agencies, other entities and institutions, society and citizens in general participate in it in a coordinated manner, according to their respective areas of competence and abilities."

4. It is worth noting that Decree-Law No. 207 "on the use of nuclear energy" establishes the general precepts that govern this subject. Decree No. 208 "on the National System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material" provides the norms for implementing the System in order to contribute to the efficient management of nuclear material and to detect any unauthorized use, loss or movement thereof. Domestic law on biosecurity and the application of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is epitomized in Decree-Law No. 190/99 and Resolution No. 2/2004 of the Ministry of Science, Technology and

Environment. With regard to chemical weapons, Decree-Law No. 202/1999 governs the national application of the Chemical Weapons Convention; in addition, 2005 saw the adoption of decision 5517 of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers "on offences involving violations of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention", which completes the legislative measures required for the application of the Convention.

5. In the current international context, the observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control is particularly important, when one considers the unilateralism that some try to impose on international relations, where the superpower unleashes wars of aggression in various parts of the world, makes indiscriminate use of every kind of weapon and boycotts the possibility of any multilateral assumption of new commitments in that regard. At the same time, an arms race continues to be allowed to run riot in which conventional weapons undergo rapid qualitative upgrading and the enormous arsenals of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world remain untouchable.

6. The existence of ever more sophisticated weapons of mass destruction is one of the gravest threats to international peace and security as well as to the fragile environmental balance of our planet and sustainable development for all without distinction. For all these reasons Cuba once again affirms that the only truly effective solution for avoiding the effects of the use of weapons of mass destruction or accidental contamination by them continues to be their total elimination. Extremely important in this context is the universalization of all the international treaties on disarmament relating to the prohibition against weapons of mass destruction in the chemical, biological and nuclear domains.

7. Regarding the objective of nuclear disarmament, it is extremely urgent that the Conference on Disarmament initiate negotiations towards a treaty on this subject, for the purpose of eliminating weapons of this type within a specified time frame and under strict international control. An international treaty on nuclear disarmament must necessarily include measures for protection of the environment.

8. Strengthening the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction during the coming years is key to the protection of the environment and the preservation of biodiversity on our planet. The draft verification protocol to the Convention, which was the subject of negotiations a few years ago, included, among other things, proposals for environmental protection measures for the application of the Convention. The international community must not abandon that objective.

9. It is also important to highlight the relevance and importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, ratified by Cuba on 10 April 1978, which is still fully in force and should be universally accepted. At present, only 72 States are parties to this important instrument.[1]

10. The Republic of Cuba wishes to reiterate, yet again, its concern over the serious impact of military activities on the environment and the lives of human

[1] According to the status of multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations as of 31 December 2005.

beings. In the geographic area closest to us, one still observes the serious harm caused by the United States Navy to the health and ecology of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, used indiscriminately as a military practice range for its acts of aggression and conquest, where use was even made of materiel having radioactive components. The inhabitants of Vieques have the highest cancer rate in all Puerto Rico.[2]

11. During the war in Kosovo, the use of uranium in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombardment of industrial infrastructures, refineries, chemical plants and fuel depots caused severe, long-term damage to the environment and the health of the inhabitants [3]

12. In the current war of conquest and occupation of Iraq by the United States, the harm caused to the environment, property and human life has been devastating.[4]

13. The Republic of Cuba, with the same force with which it demands the elimination of weapons of mass destruction as the only real solution for avoiding the dangers of the use of such weapons, denounces the immoral and unjustifiable character of present and future wars of aggression and conquest, which are part of the strategy of world domination of imperialism so harmful to the exercise of the right of peoples to life, peace and sustainable development.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[1 May 2007]

The Ministry of National Defence affirms that Lebanon possesses no weapons that have an impact on or are detrimental to the environment and supports the agreements on disarmament, arms control and the observance of environmental norms, taking into consideration the concern caused by Israel on account of its possession and retention of an enormous arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, which could be detrimental to the environment even if not used.

---

[2] Data of the Cancer Registry of the Department of Health of Puerto Rico show that cancer rates on Vieques began to rise with the start of bombing by the United States Navy in 1979 (Zavala-Segarra, D. *Incidencia de Cáncer en Vieques*).

[3] During the NATO bombing against Yugoslavia in 1999, some 31,000 missiles containing depleted uranium were used against 112 targets, most of them in Kosovo and southern Serbia. According to Slobodan Cikaric, a physician at the Belgrade Institute of Oncology, "it is still very early to establish the consequences of the contamination caused in 1999 by the bombardments against Serbia". "One must take into account that the leukaemia caused by radiation takes two to five years to develop, and that the development of other types of cancer caused by radiation may take up to 10 years."

[4] The British medical journal *The Lancet* concluded that, "making conservative assumptions we think that about 100,000 excess deaths, or more [of civilians] have happened since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Violence accounted for most of the excess deaths and air strikes from coalition forces accounted for most of the violent deaths". The article adds that 84 per cent of the deaths were attributed to coalition forces — and most involved women and children.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[13 April 2007]

1. Mexico is convinced and insists that the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control must be done in a manner compatible with international cooperation to prevent, control and eliminate possible harmful effects on the environment. Moreover, it is conscious of the grave destructive effects of nuclear, biological, chemical, radiological and other such weapons, as well as conventional weapons, and of the serious danger involved in their possible diversion for military purposes by unauthorized actors.

2. More than 10 years after the handing down of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the "legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons", Mexico reiterates that, as pointed out by the Court, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, it is undeniable that nuclear weapons, owing to their inherent characteristics, represent a constant threat to the environment and could have a catastrophic impact on it. For this reason Mexico maintains its commitment to the elimination of such weapons and alerts countries concerning their possible use.

3. Mexico emphasizes that the more than 30,000 existing nuclear warheads place the world in a dangerous situation in which, should any of them be used, we will all lose, no one will win, and the impact on the environment will be disastrous and irreparable. It further stresses that the industry that produces such weapons is highly contaminating, in addition to the fact that the disposal of nuclear waste is a problem of ever-growing proportions as extensive areas are contaminated and will remain unusable for very long periods.

4. The nuclear industry for peaceful purposes, too, involves sizeable risks. It is for that reason that Mexico supports international efforts and measures for the establishment of adequate and effective international standards of security and physical protection that offer the international community the security that there will not be any unplanned harmful events to lament.

5. Mexico reiterates that progress towards the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons and nuclear non-proliferation contribute directly to saving the environment from this global threat. Mexico also considers that arms regulation in areas such as conventional weapons, anti-personnel land mines and other weapons of mass destruction also helps prevent land used for economic activities, in which civilians live, highways and other transit routes and other areas, including conflict areas, from being rendered unusable due to the presence of remnants of war, such mines or any other explosive devices that fail to distinguish between civilians and military personnel, with cruel and indiscriminate consequences and destruction of the ecosystem.

6. In this context, Mexico stresses that Stockholm principle 21 establishes the obligation to make sure that activities carried out within the jurisdiction or under the control of States do not harm the environment of other States or of zones situated outside any national jurisdiction, as does principle 2 of the Rio Declaration. Thus, agreements on disarmament and arms control must include the environment factor

among their provisions so as to preserve the environment and satisfy existing environmental norms.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[11 May 2007]

1. An account is given of the processes followed under the two treaties ratified by Spain that have major repercussions on the destruction of arms or munitions and also with respect to small arms and light weapons.

Destruction of anti-personnel mines

Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

2. The 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines requires the destruction of national stockpiles within a period not exceeding 4 1/2 years from the deposit of the instrument of ratification.

3. By Act 33/1998, of 5 October of that year, on the total prohibition of anti-personnel mines and weapons with similar effects (Official State Bulletin No. 239 of 6 October 1998), Spain undertook to destroy its arsenal of anti-personnel mines before 7 October 2001. The destruction process, however, ended 10 months earlier, on 3 October 2000, i.e., more than two years in advance of the time limit established by article 4 of the Convention.

4. The destruction of the anti-personnel mines was performed by the Spanish company Fabricaciones Extremeñas, which guaranteed maximum security and zero environmental impact, in accordance with the ISO 14000 standard and Council Directive 94/67/EC on the incineration of hazardous waste.

5. A total of 849,365 mines were destroyed in a record period of 28 months, which amounts to a rate of 1,200 per day. The total cost of the operation was 3,228,000 euros, so that the unit cost of destruction was limited to 3.8 euros.

6. The process began with the mines being taken apart, the explosive charge being separated from the casing and the rest of the components. Next, the explosive was incinerated in a 450-degree furnace. The resulting gases were then passed through a treatment line in which heavy metals were separated out in order subsequently to be collected by waste management enterprises. The end gases were subjected to catalytic oxidation whereby carbon monoxide was transformed into carbon dioxide, thus ultimately causing no harm to the environment. As evidence of the elimination of these mines, the membrane with the identification number and date of destruction were retained.

Destruction of conventional weapons

Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe

7. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which entered into force in 1992, called for a reduction of existing equipment, which in the case of Spain

meant the requirement to inactivate 371 battle tanks and 87 artillery guns, a process which was completed on 16 November 1995.

8. Subsequent to that date inactivation processes have continued with a view to preventing the limits laid down in the five weapon categories from being exceeded and to making up for the increase in their number, as a result of modern material being put into service, by destroying the older materiel. Moreover, Spain has undertaken a process of reducing stockpiles that goes beyond the obligations imposed by the Treaty.

9. The destruction process is regulated in the Protocol on Procedures Governing the Reduction of Conventional Armaments and Equipment Limited by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which establishes the operations to which a weapon must be subjected in order to be considered unserviceable. However, it does not impose any environmental regulation; on the contrary, it provides that "each State Party shall have the right to use any technological means it deems appropriate".

10. In the case of Spain, reduction has been contracted out to private enterprises which, from an environmental standpoint, are subject to the general laws of the State and the specific laws of the autonomous communities in which the reduction takes place.

11. The process is as follows:

(a) As a preliminary step, usable components not subject to compulsory reduction under the Treaty are removed from the weapon along with any remaining munitions. This step is carried out by the military units themselves;

(b) Next, responsibility is turned over to the reduction enterprise, which is required to effect prior removal of possible remaining contaminants, i.e., combustible liquids or gases, lubricants or coolants, electric batteries and lighting fixtures, and cleaning of soot from closed cycles (with decanting of waste water). All such contaminants are channelled into the national system for the collection of hazardous substances, whose regulations meet the general criteria established within the European Union context;

(c) Finally, the metallic parts are rendered unusable by one of the following processes: cutting into sections, deforming or crushing. Spain has rejected the explosive demolition method, precisely because of its cost to the environment. The metal remains are used as scrap by the said private enterprises, which keep them as part of the payment for their services. They are sent to blast furnaces to be melted down.

Destruction of small arms and light weapons

OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons

12. Section IV (C) 2 of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons provides as follows: "Destruction will generally be used to dispose of illicitly trafficked weapons seized by national authorities, once the legal due process is complete."

13. The above criterion has been extended to apply to arms seized by Spanish troops participating in peace operations. Inasmuch as the number of weapons apprehended is small, and even more so as the crisis situation eases, and their storage involves vulnerable sides and it is not always feasible to ensure proper security, rapid destruction is carried out as indicated in our Arms Regulations. In the case of pistols or rifles, holes are drilled in the barrel and the essential components of the receiver. Where grenade launchers and flamethrowers are involved, crushing is used if access to a plant equipped with a hydraulic press is possible; otherwise, they are cut up with a blowtorch. The destroyed elements are listed under the supervision of the chief of the unit and the related report is submitted to the management of the international organization heading the mission. In addition, on occasion, seized arms destruction ceremonies have been held in the presence of witnesses and local media.

14. Moreover, section IV (C) of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons provides: "Any small arms identified as surplus to a national requirement should, by preference, be destroyed." In this case the number of weapons to be destroyed is great and the weapons are suitably stored. Armament-reduction programmes are established which, once funded, are taken over by manufacturing installations managed by the logistic services of the Ministry of Defence or contracted out to private enterprises listed by the Ministry. The technique ordinarily used is crushing and/or cutting with mechanical or hydraulic shears, these being considered the least contaminating methods. Alternatively, in extreme cases, cutting is done with an oxyacetylene torch or mechanical saw. In all cases it is ensured that the weapon and all essential and auxiliary components are unserviceable. The armament is stricken from the inventory by means of a certificate of destruction drawn up by the board of officers designated for that purpose. Once the weapon has been destroyed, the metallic parts are separated from the rest: wood, plastics, Bakelite, glass, etc. When the various components have been separated, the metal scrap is sent to foundries, while the other residues are taken over by the national waste-treatment system.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[23 May 2007]

1. The munitions on hand in the Ordnance Directorate have no impact on the environment. They consist of regular, traditional ammunition for light arms, artillery and tanks.

2. Expired (out-of-date) or old munitions are destroyed either by dismantling or detonation.

3. Dismantling is done in secure, fortified buildings prepared for that purpose, account being taken of all recommended environmental measures.

4. Detonation, which is used for munitions that cannot be destroyed by dismantling, is carried out in open pits in uninhabited, non-agricultural areas of open desert far from grazing lands and nature preserves and does not affect natural and underground water sources. Such areas, which are protected and closed to persons not employed in them, are selected in coordination with ministries and

competent public iinstitutions, such as the Ministry of Irrigation, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment.

5. In this method of destruction, care is taken to ensure that the explosion results in the smallest possible quantity of residue. All the residue resulting from the operation of detonation is collected and buried in deep pits.

Turkey

[Original: English]
[22 June 2007]

1. The constitution of the Republic of Turkey states that "everyone has the right to live in a healthy and balanced environment" (Article 56). In this regard, it is a duty of the State and citizens to improve the natural environment, protect the environmental health and prevent environmental pollution.

2. Environmentall concerns in all areas of Turkey are addressed by the Environment Act (Act No. 872). The Ministry of Environment and Forestry is responsible for the iimplementation of that act. Moreover, there are several by-laws pertaining to waste (medical, hazard Rous, solid, etc.) management, air pollution and water quality.

3. Turkish Armed Forces carry out all activities in accordance with the above-mentioned legislation. There are also a number of separate directives and regulations, complementing the implementation of environmental norms in the Turkish Armed Forces, which are summarized as follows:

(a) Environmental directive;

(b) Air and water pollution and noise control regulation;

(c) Solid waste control regulation;

(d) Medical waste control regulation;

(e) Regulation on the control of hazardous wastes, waste oils and batteries/accumulators.

4. The Turkish Armed Forces environmental directive sets out clear and detailed terms for the protection of the environment and the optimum use and preservation of natural resources in rural and urban areas. The Turkish Armed Forces solid waste control regulation and the regulation related to hazardous wastes determines the principles, procedures and guidelines for the collection, storage and disposal/recycling of wastes (including explosives), with no or minimum adverse impact on environment and public health.

5. Moreover, it should also be noted that in accordance with the Ottawa Convention and the 2nd and 4th Protocols of the Convention on Conventional Weapons, which Turkey is party to, destruction of anti-personnel mines and related ammunition are being carried out through the methods of disarming on the spot or open destruction with due respect to environmental norms. Furthermore, a new ammunition separation, sorting and destruction facility to be inaugurated in July 2007 in Turkey was designed to operate environmental friendly and implementation of other agreements on disarmament and arms control by Turkey is being carried out in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/63.